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Ultra-Catholicism in France.

IF it were possible to fear that the bright lights of improvement could be extinguished by the folly and the fraud of man; if it were possible to believe that there is something at work stronger than the spirit of truth and liberty, the present state of France would excite all the apprehensions and all the alarms of the wise and the good. The great principles of freedom, gathered together out of the mighty wrecks of the Revolution, seemed to have been fully recognized and established on a lasting foundation; but in a moment of false and fatal security they have been undermined, and civil and religious tyranny are already shouting over their ruins.

The reforming spirit had spread through a great part of Christendom, before it was openly proclaimed and honoured by those illustrious advocates whose names are connected with its most splendid early triumphs. In the love of learning, which began to be cultivated in Europe, the Reformation found its mightiest ally. Leo the Xth. scarcely suspected that he was the great patron of those heresies against which he fulminated his loudest anathemas; but we may safely assert, that for one heretic alarmed into recantation by the terrors of his bulls, he made a hundred by his patronage of literature: * and while the progress

of civilization on the one hand broke the fetters of spiritual bondage and led on to Protestantism and reform, these in their turn, and as a natural re-action, destroyed the old and barbarous notions which held man in political servitude and slavery, and taught him to stand erect in the energy and strength of civil liberty.

These two positions, that the triumphs of Protestantism have been and are greatly dependent on the extension of knowledge and civilization, and that its progress must promote the cause of genuine freedom, are singularly corroborated by the present situation of France. * Since the period when the orthodox and infallible arguments of "sword and gun" had established the principles of "legitimacy," and a hundred and fifty thousand armed men had philosophically and satisfactorily demonstrated that nations are in reality nothing better than the appendages of royalty, the mere trappings of a coronation robe, or the animals which adorn a magnificent national estate, grazing there by the sufferance of the kingly possessor, something, as giving

and exclaimed, "O that I could have converted thee!"

Ad Maronis mausoleum
Ductus, fudit super eum
Pierorum lacrymæ.
Quem te, inquit, reddidissem
Si te vivum invenissem
Poetarum maxime!

* It is not a part of my plan to go into the historical question, in order to shew how much the interests of pure Christianity have been advanced by the spread of literature; but there are a number of little facts scattered up and down the records of past time on which I should willingly linger: for instance, I often think with peculiar pleasure on the tradition of the Italians, that St. Paul was an enthusiastic admirer of Virgil. Down to the fifteenth century the custom was preserved at Mantua of singing a hymn in honour of their great bard on St. Paul's day. They pretend that the apostle wept over the tomb of the poet,

* Of late several attempts have been made, in violation of the charter and in contempt of public opinion, to interfere with the rights of conscience in France. The lower tribunals in particular have shewn a great disposition to be intolerant. For instance, they fined the Protestant inhabitants of Nailloux more than 800 francs for refusing to hang out tapestry during the procession of the host. This sentence was confirmed on a second appeal, but ultimately reversed by the Court of Cassation. [Mon. Repos. XIII. 780.]

strength and splendor to the great proprietor, but nothing individually or collectively apart from him; the Ultras, who knew full well that they could not connect themselves with a liberal and enlightened age, and that their strength could only be founded on man's intellectual weakness, have been constantly plotting the revival of those blessed days, when priests and kings were "all in all." They have had some triumphs; but to judge from the false and foolish hopes they are indulging, they are little read in the history of man. They cannot turn backwards the tide of improvement: its stream is strong, though perhaps not now impetuous. They see but a short distance into futurity; they are even scattering about with the disease the germ of a remedy, since in the beautiful arrangements of Providence, infatuated folly becomes its own corrective.

Let it be again repeated that the great allies of Protestantism are literature and liberty. The first edition of the New Testament had scarcely been issued from the press, ere the Reformation burst upon the world. Is it the remembrance of this interesting fact which has caused the pertinacious opposition of the Church of Rome to the circulation of the Scriptures?

The Ultras in France, contemptible for their number, would be contemptible on every account, but for the patronage of the reigning family and for the concentration of their strength in the two Chambers, which give them an influence in the general system of government, to which the weakness of their party in the mass of the nation would never have dared to aspire; but what they want in strength, what they want in argument, they make up in activity and intrigue. Their missionaries, the Jannisaries of their faction, are spread over the surface of France, scattering the poison of hatred and bigotry, fanning and fostering whatever is left of the ashes of old intolerance, and kindling where they existed not the flames of discord and persecution. The mummery of Popery is again introduced; virgins and saints are re-enshrined in their former niches; immense crucifixes are erected in the squares and the highways. All these are comparatively innocent; but their crusades against literature, their vehem-

ment opposition to the Lancasterian Schools and the Bible Societies, their admiration of the Inquisition, and their apologies for St. Bartholomew's-day and the murderers at Nismes, (which the writer has heard from their lips,) these are fearful and threatening symptoms on which pity would be wasted, and to which charity will not apply.

Will it be believed that one of their Journals (*Journal des Débats*) has ventured thus to address the Protestants: "*Hommes imprudens! ne craignez-vous pas qu'il ne vous prenne envie de nous compter?*"* That Llorente, the admirable author of the History of the Inquisition, has been deprived of the privilege of saying mass, because of his enmity to the holy office and the Concordat? That the Ultras objected (but not successfully) to the establishment of a chemical chair at Marseilles, under the pretence that "chemistry had caused the Revolution"? But those who love to mark the course of the philanthropist and the patriot, and who have seen how the estimable Grégoire was excluded from the Chamber of Deputies, the assassin-like malignity with which he was attacked by those who seemed emulating that famous mob of old, who cried, "Crucify him, crucify him," will wonder at nothing, for the Ultras seem capable of every thing.†

* And when (mistaken men) you have counted the Protestants, and find you have thirty to one against them, will you have courage and Catholicism to attack and to extirpate them?

† Grégoire, in a letter to the writer, thus expresses himself: "*J'espère vous revoir quand vous reviendrez, si cependant vous me trouvez vivant, car la furie des gens à qui je n'ai jamais fait aucun mal, mais qui sont stimulés et largement payés, est poussée à tel excès qu'après avoir tenté d'assassiner ma réputation il ne leur reste que de m'assassiner physiquement, et je ne doute pas de leur bonne volonté à cet égard. Cependant la Providence à la quelle je me suis toujours confié, m'accorde des compensations; car la virulence des outrages et l'évidence des calomnies ont tellement revolté les hommes justes et sensés qu'elles ont multiplié le nombre et la ferveur de mes amis et plus que jamais depuis trois mois j'ai été comblé de témoignages d'estime de la part des nationaux et des étrangers. Parmi les graces dont Dieu m'a favorisé*"

Of late, too, the right of the Jews to claim the enjoyment of civil liberty has been vehemently attacked.

*Non tali auxilio, non defensoribus istis
Tempus eget.*

M. L'Abbé de la Mennais has lately written a book which has attracted considerable attention in France. It is a violent attack on the Protestants, which he calls an "Essay on Indifference in Religious Matters." He has been ably answered by M. Vincent, * of Nismes, whose volume is entitled "Observations on Religious Unity," † and these two works will be made the basis of what remains to be said on the general subject at issue, and on the present state of religious opinions in France.

M. de la Mennais is, perhaps, the individual whom the Ultras would, by common consent, fix on to represent them. He has some talents and learning. He is a writer in the *Conservateur*, an admirer of Chateaubriand, a friend of Marcellus. He speaks out honestly too. He vehemently protests against the circulation of the Bible, and insists that the Bible Societies are great propagators of crime; the very names of "liberty" and "reformation" he pursues with violent, implacable hatred. He boasts that his church is supremely intolerant (*souverainement intolérante*) towards error, and asserts that men *must* be forced into the safe and orthodox path. He is irreconcilably offended with the progress of civilization, and (as the persecutors of old) calls Christian charity, indifference—curses and anathemas, a proper zeal for religion.

On one occasion, however, he lets the secret escape him. Luther taught a worse heresy than any of his religious errors: "He taught that sove-

reignty resides in the people." Unpardonable blasphemy! whose consequences have brought even kings to a scaffold. *

A charge most industriously and repeatedly levelled against the Protestants is, that they have little respect for the holy Fathers of the church † This, next to accusing them of a want of reverence for the Sacred Writings themselves, which indeed it would be difficult to prove against them, is one of the arguments on which the Catholics mainly rely. But what do they mean by these charges? Are they themselves always willing to admit the authority of the Fathers? † Will they pardon Tertullian for asserting again and again the materiality of the soul, and that there was a time when neither sin nor the Son existed? (*Fuit tempus quum delictum et filius non fuerunt. Advers. Hermos. C. iii.*) or Irenæus, who says Jesus Christ knew not the day of judgment at all, neither as God nor man? § Will they give up the personality of the Holy Ghost with Lactantius; || own that the history of the creation is but an allegory with Origen ¶ and St. Augustin, ** and use the language of the latter and of Tertullian with respect to Transubstantiation? †† Will they allow Justin Martyr to give equal authority to the

* "Luther et ses disciples persuadèrent à une partie de l'Europe que la souveraineté réside dans le peuple; et bientôt le sang des rois ruisselle sur les échafauds."—P. 49.

† It is to be hoped the Abbé allows his beard to grow, in order to escape Tertullian's severity on those who employ a razor "as lying against their own faces, and impiously attempting to improve the works of the Creator."—*De Spectaculis*, cap. xxiii.

‡ Many old Catholic writers, Cajetan and Andrada for instance, protest against the authority of the Fathers being put in the balance against Scripture testimony.

§ L. ii. cap. xlviii. see also Tert. de Resurr. cap. xxii. p. 338, (edit. 1664,) and Origen. Hom. in Matt. fol. 64.

|| Hieron, Ep. lxxv. ¶ Philoc. p. 12.

** De Gen. contra Manich. II. 2.

†† Non enim Dominus dubitavit dicere, Hoc est corpus meum, cum signum daret corporis sui. Contra Adim. cap. xii. Tertullian explains this text, *figurâ corporis mei*.

j'apprécie infiniment celle d'avoir pu quelquefois faire du bien à ceux qui m'avaient persécuté et outragé. Je desire qu'il m'en fournisse de nouveau et fréquemment les occasions.

* M. Vincent is Editor of the Protestant Magazine, called *Mélanges de Religion*, which is published monthly at Nismes.

† *Observations sur l'Unité Religieuse en Réponse au Livre de M. de la Mennais*, &c. A Nismes, 8vo. To be had of Treuttel and Wurtz, Soho Square, London.

Sybil oracles as to the Old Testament; permit Clement of Alexandria to assert that an amiable Heathen may be saved as well as a Christian believer, and to attack the horrible doctrine of eternal torments? Will they give the sacrament to children with St. Cyprian, and deny original sin with St. Chrysostom, or say, as Origen* does, that the very devils may be saved at last? Alas! there is more heresy among the Fathers than they are aware of. †

But this is little; for such heresies there are other authorities: faith has yet a much more difficult task. We must believe the story of the Phoenix resuscitated from its ashes, for the fact is recorded by Clement of Rome, ‡ of Alexandria, § by Origen || and St. Ambrose; ¶ the latter of whom says, *Hoc relatione crebra et scripturarum auctoritate agnoscitur. (De Fide Resurr.)* On the credit of Justin Martyr** we must admit that Ptolemy Philadelphus sent deputies to Herod to borrow the sacred books, though the former lived nearly two centuries before the latter was born; on the assurance of St. Epiphany †† we must assert that the Indus and the Ganges are the same river, that they water Ethiopia and empty themselves westwards of Cadiz. St. Basil ‡‡ may tell us (and of course we must take the holy Father's word) that the Danube has its source in the Pyrenees, that it runs through France, and crosses the Po before it rolls into the Euxine Sea. St. Chrysostom §§ may assure us (on the best informa-

tion no doubt) that the four walls which surround heaven have their foundations laid in some remote part of the earth. Lactantius* and St. Augustin† may be allowed to abuse those who asserted the existence of the antipodes. St. Hilary‡ may call the birds of the air spiritual beings, and the flowers of the field angels of light. It is all canonical, the holy Fathers have said it. §

Christian charity would induce us to hope that the Abbé in this discussion has really carried into effect some of the good maxims of the *holy fathers*; as, for instance, that tricks and stratagems may be employed in controversy against heretics, if more honourable weapons fail. St. Jerome insists that a man may argue against his own conscience, if such an argument will help him against his adversary. St. Athanasius observes this style of reasoning in St. Dionysius, the Areopagite; and St. Basil justifies the doctrine, drawing a fine distinction between *dogmaticè disserere* and *disputare*; ||—nice casuists these!

* Instit. III. † De Civit. Dei, XVI.

‡ Hilar. Pictav. Op. p. 633, 4th Ed. 1693.

§ Some of the glosses of the Fathers on Scripture are almost too barefaced for credibility. St. Hilary says the words of Jesus, Matt. xvi. 23, ought to be read, "Get thee behind me;—Satan, thou art an offence to me;" the former part of the sentence only being addressed to Peter, the latter to the devil. St. Ambrose insists that Peter told no lie when he said "I know not the man," our Lord being not a man but a God; and both Clement and Eusebius assert that the Peter whom Paul withstood at Antioch was not Peter the Apostle, but somebody else. Surely if men are perplexed by a hard argument, they would do better to follow Anthony's precept, as given by Cicero, and pass it over in silence.

|| See more of this in Daille, pp. 159—161. I believe it is L. Paramus, in his book on the Holy Inquisition, who gives a curious example of a pious fraud in connexion with a theological dispute. St. Ephrem, the Syrian, was to have a public controversy with a heretic. Finding he was absent, the Saint went to his house, and having induced the woman who lived there to lend him his opponent's Bible, he glued all the leaves together and returned it. In the height of the disputation, St. Ephrem dared the heretic to

* Aug. de Civit. Dei, L. xxi. cap. vii.

† The early Fathers, without exception, I imagine, taught and believed that the day of judgment and final consummation of all things would take place in their time. Those who wish to see their glosses on Scripture exposed, may consult Whitby's *Dissertatio de S. Scripturarum Interpretatione secundum Patrum Commentarios*: or Daille on the use of the Fathers, a work of uncommon merit. As to the Millenium, the gross and sensual notions of the Fathers form an admirable counterpart to the pictures of a Mahomedan paradise.

‡ Ad Corin. p. 34.

§ Stromat. p. 5.

|| De Prin. II.

¶ De Pœnit. II.

** Apol. p. 2.

†† In Anchor. p. 6.

‡‡ Hom. III.

§§ Hom. XIV.

M. de la Mennais, in defiance of all history and all experience, charges Protestantism with having demoralized and depraved society.* He calls the French Revolution the triumph and the consecration of the principles of Protestantism, and asserts that it destroyed, in consequence, all the virtues of the French character. It has never occurred to the Abbé, perchance, and yet it is a truth confirmed by all authentic testimony, that the most decided friends and forwarders of revolutions are even such as *he*—in a word, the absurd advocates of kingly and priestly despotism. The deduction which he makes seems singularly remote from his premises, and instead of reminding him that the origin of the Revolution, the up-springing of an universal nation to liberty, was welcomed by the best and the wisest of every class of Christians, (and surely Protestants, as Protestants, had nothing to do with its crimes,) we would have him look back to the reign, the golden reign, of Louis the XIVth, the *great*, the favourite Prince of the Bourbon dynasty. Was there ever a more striking example of open, abandoned, universal profligacy? Yet he was Catholic enough in all conscience: he revoked the Edict of Nantes, and instead of banishing, would, no doubt, have rejoiced to be able to burn the Protestants.

Happily, Protestantism has nothing to fear from that tendency to improvement which is led on in the train of years.† Whatever lessens the power

produce proofs from the Sacred Volume. The latter anticipated a glorious triumph, but he could not open the book. The hearers cried out, "A miracle, a miracle!" and the heretic, having no notion of the trick that had been played him, was completely confounded, and gave himself up for convinced.

* This is no new charge. Pallavicini said, "the Protestants could not shew one man illustrious for piety, and few for learning;" but the time seemed gone by for *such* accusations.

† Some of those writers who do most honour to the Catholics are honest enough to own, that its advocates have often disgraced themselves and their cause by the precepts they have taught and the examples they have given. John Louis Vives says, "They have not only marred and smothered all other arts, but divinity

of ignorance and despotism, is its friend; whatever strengthens these is its enemy. Its hopes, its expectations are forwards and far stretching. In the developement of mind, in the progress of science, it finds its tried and surest auxiliaries. It heaves no sigh of regret over departed darkness, it sheds no tear of disappointment upon opening day. Liberty and light are its companions; they are never far asunder: truth and reason sing its triumphs over intolerance and barbarism.

It is well for us that we live in a day when a weak argument cannot always be enforced with a strong hand, or we might be reasonably alarmed at some of the propositions which are urged against us all. De la Mennais insists that the principle of Protestantism is that of Deism, of Atheism, all alike presumptuous pride and daring rebellion; and if there should be any mistake in this or any other severe judgment, and an innocent man should get persecuted and punished, n'importe; for, as the Abbé says, "*L'autorité peut tout, soit pour le bien, soit pour le mal:*" of course Roman Catholic authority!

The Abbé goes farther. He asserts that a *new* sort of persecution is now directed against the Catholics. Will it be credited that he insists the Catholics are *persecuted*, because they are not allowed to persecute? They conscientiously believe they ought to put down heresy, and yet they are compelled to see its triumphant progress. Lest this monstrous distortion of argument should appear misrepresentation, take his own words: "*Les gouvernements favorisent l'indifférence,*" (he always uses this expression when he means to say toleration,) "*de tout leur pouvoir; et, chose inouïe, s'efforcent d'entraîner le Christianisme dans ce système; nouveau genre de persécution, dont nous sommes loin de connaître tous les effets.*"*

too, which they have profaned with their curiosity, their vanity, their folly and rashness:" and in Julius the Third's time, the Catholic Bononian Council seems to have gone almost as far as the Reformers in recognizing the errors of the Popish Church.

* Instead of remarking on these absurdities, it will be wise, perhaps, to

It would be well if those who attack Protestantism would better understand its principles. What does the Abbé gain by shewing the inconsistencies and pointing out the errors of the early Reformers, unless those inconsistencies and errors form a part of the Protestant creed? The great ground of Protestantism is opposition to the pretension that any human *authority* is a sufficient security for truth. M. Menais must know that Protestants believe nothing merely *because* it has been believed by earlier Protestants. They will not justify a cruel deed because it was done by Calvin, nor maintain a weak argument because it was held by Luther.

The perplexities and absurdities to which the advocates of intolerance are reduced, never disturbed the Abbé. He owns he admires the "stability" of religious notions among the old Pagans, and thinks they acted very wisely in not troubling themselves about matters settled for them by the clearer heads of their pontifices. He has been rather premature in talking of the triumphs of pure Catholicism in Spain, and sadly misled in attributing the success of the patriots in the late invasion to their unpolluted religious principles. Will he now be honest enough to own that a "reforming spirit" had something to do with *their* exertions; that a love of liberty was, perhaps, almost as strong as an attachment to the Inquisition? He will quote Spain no longer! Spain offered at best a melancholy subject for congratulation, and Protestants were well satisfied that it should be quoted against them. It was the representation of Ultra triumphs, garnished in all their glory. Its supports were the tottering pillars of ignorance, persecution, tyranny, folly: they were touched as with the spear of Ithuriel—and they fell.

But when the Catholics come to persuade us how desirable and delight-

ful it would be to have one permanent, infallible authority in matters of faith, let us agree with them that they are in the right, and point to the Bible. "The Bible, the Bible is the religion of Protestants:" but they would simplify and secure its correct interpretation—and how? By offering us (what would take a dozen lives to read, and a dozen centuries to understand) the ponderous tomes of church-tradition, the hundred folios of the holy Fathers, libraries full of decrees of councils* and bulls of popes, all contradictory and all canonical! Indeed a Catholic cannot do better than take his creed on the good faith of his parish priest, and his parish priest may wade through this sea of infallible authorities—if he can.

But where is this boasted "unity of faith," this unerring, universal, authoritative religion? At Rome, or at Santiago? Among Jesuits or Jansenists, Papists or Gallicists, the secular or the regular clergy?—all quarrelling, and all in the right. The Catholics have engaged in an impracticable work, which every day makes more difficult, and shews to be more absurd. Man becomes less docile as he grows more wise. If they will reason with us calmly, we will listen to them; but if they indulge in language that is uncourteous, in threats that are unchristian; if they misrepresent, if they calumniate us, they give us a bad opinion of their religion and of themselves. Even the cold and the indifferent are roused to opposition by uncharitableness and oppression; but let them not (like the Abbé) confound indifference with the spirit of tolerance and candour which now happily begins to pervade society, nor quarrel with the progress of Christian charity. They, in their turn, may want its protection; and surely they will admit that their advocate has fixed on a most unfortunate moment for charging the Protestant body with careless indifference; a

direct the Abbé to a poet of his own nation, who says,

"Quand l'absurde est outré, c'est lui
faire trop d'honneur
De vouloir par la raison convaincre son
erreur :
S'enchérir vaudra mieux, sans s'échauf-
fer la bile."

* Those who wish to inform themselves how many false councils have been published by the Catholics; how they have corrupted and suppressed the genuine ones, and how divided the authority of the Roman Church has been with respect to these subjects, may consult Robert Jenkins's "Historical Examination."

moment in which their efforts for the diffusion of Christianity are without a parallel in the history of man: when new bonds of union—those of common exertions in the common cause of virtue—unite even rival nations; when such a mass of practical benevolence is in action; when every species of calamity finds pity, if not relief; when no distance, no difficulties, form an impediment to the plans and pursuits of beneficent philanthropy; when every sect, every class of Protestants, seems rivalling the rest in Catholic ardour.

Nor will it avail our opponents to quote the example of England in justification of a system of exclusion and of persecution.* It may be true that England is shamefully backward in recognizing the great claims of Christian liberty, and yet this is but a weak argument for the permanence of spiritual domination. It may also be true, as M. de la Mennais asserts, that our Anglican Church threw off the yoke of ecclesiastical authority to submit to one more ignominious, that of the civil power;† and yet this is far from proving that the human mind should be subjected to any yoke at all while pursuing its honest and rational

inquiries.* The Abbé wishes that his Church alone should have the power of punishing men for their religious opinions. We should not envy it the disgraceful privilege. We wish we could look round the Christian world and say—To it alone belongs the shame.

The Abbé might have spared the contempt he pours upon the miserable “handful” (poignée) of reforming Vaudois.† They were not contemptible even for numbers, till mowed down by their merciless persecutors, and one stain and stigma would be removed from the “Catholic Church” if that black page of history could be blotted out.

If Catholicism cannot resist the progress of knowledge, nor flourish amidst that general improvement which in the last thirty years has wrought such wondrous changes in society, it has seen its best days—its knell is being tolled. When learning enabled its clergy to domineer over the vulgar,

to the Pope, being a necessary deduction, and this leading to another consequence, that “every human creature must be subject to the papal authority”? Lloyd on Papal Supremacy.

* The Abbé says he would have heretics visited with only spiritual punishments.—Is that because these are the most dreadful in the eye of a Catholic? Or is it (M. Vincent asks) in the same spirit with that of the Inquisition, which also disclaimed inflicting civil penalties, and handed over its victims to the secular power, saying, “Be merciful”?

† “Leur unique ressource est de chercher des ancêtres parmi les Albigeois, infame colonie de Manichéens, qui passèrent d’Orient en Italie, et d’Italie dans les Gaules dont ils épouvantèrent les habitants par des crimes inconnus; parmi les Vaudois, une poignée d’obscurs fanatiques,” &c., p. 217. Yet it was a French Monarch who said of these sects, “They are better men than I or my Catholic subjects.”—St. Bernard’s authority ought to weigh something with a Catholic, and he says of them, (the Waldenses,) “Nothing is more Christian than their faith, more commendable than their conversation. They hurt none, circumvent none, are true and honest in all their dealings, and keep their promises.” Sermon. lxxv. And this, too, in an age when, according to the same authority, profligacy and hypocrisy were too extensive to be concealed, and too barefaced even to desire concealment. Sermon. xxxiii.

* P. 84, “Les Anglais tolèrent l’idolâtrie à Ceylon, et persecutent le Catholicisme en Angleterre!” &c.

† I sometimes regret that amidst the discussions on the minor points of doctrine, the great principles which separated us originally from the Church of Rome are almost forgotten, and especially many of the monstrous notions which distinguished the Papists before the Reformation. No intelligent modern Catholic would justify the absurdities held by his forefathers. The Catholicism we now see around us is a *reformed religion*. What would be said, in the present day, of one of the legends in the Salisbury breviary on Thomas à Becket?

Aqua Thomæ quinquies,
Varians colorem,
In lac semel transiit,
Quater in cruorem.
Ad Thomæ memoriam
Quater lux descendit,
Et in sancti gloriam
Cereos accendit.

Or, how would the monstrous proposition of Boniface the VIIIth be now received, that “Christ had taken Peter in consortium individue Trinitatis;” the propriety of the title of “Our Lord God,” as given

with that view it was encouraged and pursued.* For it would seem clear that, abstractedly, the Romish Church has no love of literature, since now that information has burst upon the lower classes of society, there is nothing but railing against education and inquiry and science. The spell of ignorance is broken. Let them be assured nothing can now avail them but the power of knowledge. Nor will it do to say that religion has no connexion with literature. "Vous ne pouvez rien penser, rien écrire, rien proposer, rien perfectionner, sans entrer dans la domaine de la religion." On no subject will a free and generous spirit allow itself to be directed by the mere overbearing presumption of an erring fellow-mortal, and least of all on one illumined by light from heaven. He who pretends to forge the chains of intellect, urges the strongest possible argument against himself. On this matter M. Vincent thus beautifully expresses himself: "Le Christianisme est pour moi la vérité pure et sainte; il est la vérité qui vient de Dieu; mais si, tel qu'il est, je devais l'adopter sans examen, et si le supplice était là pour me faire expier mon refus; peut-être je cesserais de le trouver tel; je braverais le supplice pour ne pas me laisser avilir; ou, si je cedais à la menace, même avec un esprit convaincu, il se

* In England, however, according to the testimony of William of Malmesbury, (in Will. I. lib. iii. p. 103,) "our priests could scarcely stammer out mass: he who understood grammar was esteemed a prodigy of learning: the great ones left the Church, and the mass of society was abandoned to shameful intemperance." Extravagant as are the extravagancies of the Catholicism of Southern Europe, there is nothing worse than may be found in the Salisbury Breviary, to which I have already referred. There is one grant of indulgence for 300 days, another for 500 years, another for 11,000, and another, of John XXII., for 90,000 years—a pretty liberal offer this for the repetition of three short prayers! Cardinal Richelieu once puzzled his chaplain by asking him "how many masses would fetch *any soul* out of purgatory." The chaplain was unable to reply; and the Cardinal helped him by saying, "As many masses would be required for *that* purpose, as snow-balls for heating an oven."

joindrait à ma croyance pendant toute la durée de ma vie, un sentiment de gêne et de lâcheté qui la dépouillerait de toute influence sur mon âme et peut-être finirait par me la faire haïr."

Little more seems necessary to explain the characters and dispositions of the Ultra-Royalists of France. They have their supporters in *this* country; and those who have been rejoicing in the triumph of their principles, hardly know to what those principles are leading. France is now threatened with the fate of Spain; but whatever conquests intolerance and despotism may gain, they will be insecure and temporary. Ages have at length given to liberty a spirit of immortality.

Elle peut tomber—mais c'est comme la foudre

Qui se relève et gronde au haut des airs.

B.

Walthamstow,
May 20, 1820.

SIR,

IT has sometimes been objected to Unitarianism that it is a cold and philosophical system, which by no means lays the same hold on the feelings with those views of religion which are denominated Calvinistic. This objection I wish briefly to consider. And in reply to it, I should say, that the true test of religious feeling, I mean that feeling which alone is valuable, is a good and holy life. Now, if Unitarians, as a body, fall below their fellow-professors in the practice of Christian virtue, some presumption may be derived hence against their doctrine. But this, I trust, is not the fact; nor is this, I believe, alleged against them. Having premised thus much, I do not wish to deny, that the Calvinistic system is calculated to make a stronger impression on the feelings than the simpler doctrine of the Unitarian. And fiction, in like manner, often has the advantage over truth in the power of impressing the imagination and the heart. But what are the feelings which this system addresses, and which it so powerfully affects? Chiefly and peculiarly the feelings of apprehension and terror. And certainly it is not less calculated to overwhelm the soul with horror than to confound and *prostrate* the understanding. But it will be said, that by the economy of Re-

demption it calls forth in the sincere believer the liveliest emotions of gratitude and joy. Be it so. But does it follow hence that the views on which these affections are founded are correct? Then we must establish a new test of truth; and those opinions must be considered as most likely to be theoretically just by which the feelings are most deeply interested. But is there, then, nothing in the Unitarian doctrine upon which the human heart can fix with a warmth of religious affection? I trust that the experience of many of its professors can bear witness, that, by the views which it gives of the Divine Being, it lays a foundation for that sacred admiration of his character which cannot be long cherished without terminating in love to him; and that, by the representations which it exhibits of the Divine government, it encourages the most cheerful trust in Providence, and an unqualified submission to the will of God. And though it directs every sentiment that can properly be termed devotional to the Universal Parent alone, it leaves room for that affectionate regard to Jesus Christ which will constrain the sincere believer to keep his commandments.

I now propose to inquire, whether the mere ardent feelings which are inspired by the Calvinistic doctrine can justly be considered as a moral benefit? And in this inquiry I would first ask, Are the feelings in question excited by practical principles? If not, it is fair to conclude, that they are practically useless. Calvinism, indeed, by the instrumentality of terror, may sometimes secure a *greater degree of attention to religion* than the milder doctrine of the Unitarian will usually direct to it. And this appears to be the only imaginable advantage to which the system can lay claim. But it may bear a question, whether what is gained in point of strong impression will make any compensation for what is lost by encumbering a system of plain practical truths with dark and inexplicable mysteries. But in relation to the present inquiry it is worthy of remark, that feelings which elevate the mind much above its ordinary tone cannot be long sustained, and consequently that the *sum* of devotional feeling in the serious-minded Unitarian may not be less than in the serious

Calvinist, though the former may not experience the occasional fervours of the latter. And it may also be observed, *without any imputation on the sincerity of our Calvinistic brethren*, that the appearance of religious feeling, which is exhibited in their religious exercises, may sometimes go beyond what is actually experienced. A certain language founded on their system may be, and probably often is employed, when the feelings of which it seems to be the natural expression are not in fact excited. But granting that these feelings are awakened whenever the language which is appropriate to them issues from the lips, yet when they have subsided, the mind may be left less sensible to the influence of those practical considerations which address themselves chiefly to the understanding. In connexion with this remark I would observe, and the observation is by no means unimportant, that when strong religious feelings are excited by mysterious doctrines that have no necessary relation to practice, there is danger lest the concerns of morality should be regarded as uninteresting and of small comparative value. And that this is not an imaginary danger seems sufficiently proved by fact. To the great majority of Calvinistic professors the moral part of religion does not appear to present a subject of interesting reflection. And the preacher, who should make it his primary business to illustrate and enforce that bright assemblage of virtues which constitutes the Christian character, would be soon suspected of not being sound in the faith, and would probably be left in a short time to deliver his lectures on *dry morality* to empty pews. A Calvinist, I cheerfully confess, may love virtue, as a man, and may practise it, as a Christian; but *as a Calvinist*, he cannot regard it with the interest with which it will be regarded by the consistent Unitarian. He holds it, indeed, to be essential to the favour of God; but his notions of original depravity and the regenerating influence of the Spirit place it out of the sphere of human exertion; not to say that the atoning sacrifice and imputed righteousness of Christ seem to do away the necessity of *labouring to attain* that for the want of which so extraordinary a compensation has been made. In the esti-

mation of the Unitarian, on the other hand, virtue is, strictly speaking, a human attainment, resulting naturally and necessarily from the proper exercise of the human powers, and, in itself considered, the object of Divine approbation and complacency.

But to return from this digression, I observe, once more, that where great stress is laid upon fervours of religious affection, there is no small danger lest the character should be estimated by them; than which no error can be more prejudicial to the interests of Christian virtue. In the opinion of the Calvinist, the most upright and holy life is but an equivocal evidence that the work of grace has been carried on in the heart. Certain feelings must be experienced before this evidence can be pronounced to possess any value. But it is easy to see that a man who is not enamoured of moral rectitude, may not unnaturally fall into the error of laying more stress on the requisite feelings, than on the practice which ought to accompany them; and I am greatly mistaken if it is not much easier to obtain the one than to observe the other. But after all, it will be said that Calvinism, by means of the powerful impression which it makes on the imagination and feelings, has a great effect upon the lower orders of society, and has been the happy means of reclaiming many from vicious irregularities to sobriety and decency of conduct. This I believe to be true; and it seems to furnish something like an explanation of a phenomenon, which to the Unitarian might appear extraordinary and perplexing; namely, that what he regards as a gross corruption of Christianity should have spread so widely and prevailed so long. To this system, however, he believes that the progress of mental improvement must one day be fatal; and he is at liberty to believe, that by that time the Christian world in general may have attained sufficient refinement to allow its full efficacy to the simple doctrine of the gospel, when stripped of the awful mysteries and adventitious terrors with which it has been encompassed by the misapprehension of man.

E. COGAN.

SIR,
YOU favoured us in some former
Numbers [XIV. 461 and 670,

671] of your Repository, with an account of some steps taken to remove a national sin, the frequent and unnecessary use of oaths. Though you have not lately revived the subject, I trust it is not dropped. A recent event has more than ever shewn the necessity of some active measures being adopted on that subject. I refer to the General Election. Whoever has either engaged in, or seen the proceedings of others on that occasion, must be convinced of the demoralizing effect of oaths, both on the parties by whom they are taken, and on those by whom they are influenced to take them. The evil is not confined to Custom-house proceedings, or to the hustings, it extends to the collecting even of post-horse duties. The concern is common, and the duty of exerting ourselves to remove the sin that so much abounds, belongs to every Christian. It is one of those cases in which all may unite, without any one giving up one particle of his own system. The Ministers of the Three Denominations have on various occasions united to express their detestation of what is wrong, and have also pointed out what they have judged desirable to be done. Would not the subject of oaths fall within their province? The Friends have uniformly made their protest against this temptation to evil; and ought not other denominations to unite and awaken a due consideration of its operation? This would be a more effectual method to stop the spread of Infidelity, than multiplying penal statutes against its avowed advocates. If the public were once interested in the investigation, there is no doubt that the mischief would soon be removed. It cannot be questioned, that, if properly solicited, the subject would meet with powerful advocates in a Wilberforce, in a Grant, in a Banks, a Butterworth, a Buxton and a Lushington. Nor is it to be supposed that the Opposition Benches would withhold their aid, or the administration refuse co-operation. This is a cause in which a strong pull will not require a long pull; for the unity of human efforts may justly hope for a Divine blessing to be annexed. That this may be the case is the sincere desire of

F.

Clapton,
May 6, 1820.

SIR,
AFTER what we have heard from the Judges in the course of Sir F. Burdett's trial at Leicester, and, subsequently, on the application to set aside the verdict, (as well as in some other instances,) I think it very desirable that a Letter of Mr. Bentham's to the Editor of the Examiner, which was inserted in No. 633 of that paper, Feb. 13, should circulate widely and be placed on record. If you have room for it in the Repository I should be obliged by its insertion.

T. H. JANSON.

"Supposed Sacrifice of Power by George III.—Supposed Independence of the Judges.

"SIR,

"Pardon me—but your wonted sagacity has for a moment been laid asleep by the authority of Blackstone. In your character of the late King, in your paper of the 6th inst., that act of his, whereby he deprived his successor of the faculty of removing any of the twelve Judges, seems to be spoken of as if it were a sacrifice made of personal interest on the altar of public welfare. In itself the thing, as far as it went, was doubtless good; but as to the *motive* look again: it was the power of his successor, you will see, that paid all the expense of it; his own, so far from diminution, received great and manifest increase from it. Suppose the power of displacing these functionaries to remain to the successor, observe the consequence; as the prospect of a demise of the Crown, from whatever cause, became nearer and nearer, the apprehension of thwarting the will and pleasure of the expected successor would, in those learned breasts, become more and more intense; and, in truth, as men die at all ages, while, against all fear of losing their situations, these functionaries would have been, as they are, perfectly independent of the Monarch in possession, their conduct, in case of ill-humour between him and the Monarch in expectancy, would always be at the command of the expected successor. I say in case of *ill-humour*: and, such is the nature of man, especially of man in that situation, never has there been a reign, in which there has not been war in that sublunary heaven, called a Court, between the person who has had the sweets of royalty between his lips, and the person whose mouth was watering for them. This in particular has, and in every instance, been the case in the family of the Guelphs, since they mounted the throne of Britain:

and whether this could have been a secret to the son of Frederic Prince of Wales, let any one imagine. As to independence, on the part of those or any other functionaries—in a monarchy it is not in the nature of the case to be any thing like complete. Yes—as against punishment: no—as against reward; and in this country, who does not know, who does not feel, that the quantity of the matter of reward at the disposal of the Monarch has no bound to it?

"Public functionaries independent of the Crown? Where will you find them? As against the power of reward, look for them as long as you will, not a single one will you find. Judges independent indeed! Yes—if there were no such things as peerages or promotions: yes, if a Judge had neither friends, relations nor dependents.

"No, Sir, in the whole catalogue of vulgar errors, not many will you find that are more pernicious than that which is couched in the phrase—the *independency of the Judges*. Woe to the defendant in a political prosecution, woe to a politically obnoxious party in any suit, if the falsity of it be, though but for a moment, out of the eyes of Jurors.

"In a word, Sir, under this matchless Constitution, he who, in any of these or any other promoted or practising lawyers, looks for any thing better than a perpetual obsequious instrument in the hands of the Monarch and his Ministers, what does he see of that which is passing before his eyes? What does he know of human nature?

"In days of yore, when the state of the Constitution afforded an opposition capable of looking to office not altogether without rationally-grounded hope, dependence on one party might produce somewhat of the effect of independence as against another. Thus while you had a Murray who lay constantly prostrate before the throne, you had a Pratt who could stand sometimes on his legs. But these days are gone for ever. The possibility of their return remains no where but in the imagination of the Whigs.

"JEREMY BENTHAM."

SIR,

Edinburgh.

HIGHLY as I respect Dr. Priestley for his extensive talents, and still more for the singleness of heart with which he always supported what he thought the truth, I cannot but feel sorry that he wrote so hastily, especially those works in which there are many quotations from ancient writers, some of which appear to be obscure by the hasty manner in which

they have been translated. This is the case with some very important passages in the History of Early Opinions. Vol. III. p. 56: "The doctrine of the incarnation," Chrysostom says, "was very difficult to be received." Here the term incarnation is very properly used, being the translation of the term *σαρκωσις*; but, p. 58, Oecumenius says, "by first elements the apostle means the incarnation." Here the word is *εὐανθρωπησίη*, and it should certainly have been translated, "The things relating to the human nature of Christ." For he says, "what relates to the *human nature* must be learned in the first place; but to philosophize concerning the divinity of Christ is left to grown men:" where Dr. Priestley, by translating this word "incarnation," instead of "human nature," has made the passage scarcely intelligible. Again, in p. 390, Tertullian says, "*Ergo nec compassus est Pater Filio*," which Dr. Priestley translates, "Neither had the Father *compassion* for the Son." It should have been rendered, "Therefore neither did the Father suffer along with the Son. I hope I shall not be regarded as at all detracting from Dr. Priestley's well-merited reputation by these remarks; but in standard works, such as the History of Early Opinions well deserves to be considered, it is desirable that the minutest error should be corrected. I would also observe, that the correction of these mistakes strengthens Dr. Priestley's main argument, and adds additional force to his proof, that the early Christians were Unitarians. I was very much struck with the following passage from Chrysostom, of which Dr. Priestley has only given the substance in English, though he has quoted the whole in Greek: "Wherefore God hath highly exalted him. The heretics say, that God gave him his exaltation *through* his suffering, as the reward of his suffering. And he hath given him a name above every name, that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and of things upon earth, and of things under the earth. Thou seest, they say, that he was exalted after his crucifixion, that he received his exaltation as a reward, after his suffering." To this, Chrysostom answers, that John the Baptist called Jesus his superior before his suffering. How far this is

a sufficient answer I leave to your readers to judge. T. C. H.

"The truth is, that as all parties use Scripture language, and adapt it to their own creeds, if a person writes to be understood, it is indispensably necessary that he should explain the sense in which he uses Scripture language, in words that are not scriptural. Otherwise men may go on wrangling for ever to no purpose, &c. * * * I defy any one to say what my friend's Bible-Christianity is."—*Mon. Repos.* p. 27.

SIR, Hackney, May 15, 1820.

THE above passage from Mr. Belsham's letter, which escaped my notice until this hour, strikes me forcibly as well worth the attention of controversialists: it is exactly descriptive of an idea I had always entertained, and which was more than ever confirmed upon reading two letters from the pen of the Rev. R. Aspland, in the Times of the 10th and 11th of November last,* because these letters in which the writer professed to explain to the world the Unitarian tenets, contained (in a quotation from Mr. Butler) a string of scriptural phrases, which taken as they are understood by Christians in general, must still leave the uninformed reader in the dark, or perhaps I might be justified in saying, are calculated to mislead him, (however inadvertently,) by assimilating too closely difficult doctrines founded on the same passages of Scripture. A friend of mine, belonging to the Established Church, remarked upon these letters, that if *those* are the doctrines of the Socinians, he had entirely mistaken them; and it was not until some of the phrases alluded to had been explained to him, according to the peculiar construction of Unitarians, that the terms used, and the doctrines intended to be conveyed, could be at all reconciled to his satisfaction, and I doubt whether at last he wholly acquitted the author of writing under an impression that his opinions were not fit to bear the light, or at least the scrutiny of the Attorney-General. We are too apt to conclude, that language which is familiar to ourselves is so to others, and, no doubt, the Author of those Letters wished to shew the real distinction between the Unitarian scheme, and the opinions of their

* See *Mon. Repos.* XIV. 707—712.

Christian brethren, as well as to distinguish their views of Christianity from Deism; but however well adapted they might be to the latter purpose, the peculiarities of the Unitarian doctrines are not sufficiently discoverable by the general reader—the unexplained use of one phrase, viz. "the Son of God," will suffice as an example.

So impressed was I with this conviction on the first perusal of that statement of the Unitarian creed, that the importance of some compendious book of reference for a candid and enlightened explanation of scriptural terms appeared to me beyond question; and a few weeks afterwards I took the liberty to suggest to the Rev. Dr. John Evans, the certain good effects which a dictionary of theological terms must produce, giving the various constructions upon which the respective opinions of a few of the leading sects are founded, with the etymology as far as practicable; and I am persuaded, that if one of your literary Correspondents could be induced to undertake such a work, he could not render a greater service to the religious inquirer. I have been told that the Author of the Sketch of the several Denominations obtained the sanction of a leader in each sect, before he sent the Article which described them to the press.

S. C—.

SIR,

IN a former Letter, [XIV. 82 and 293,] I have considered the opinions of the modern *reasoning* orthodox on the doctrine of future punishment, as reducible to this standard: namely, that though the Scriptures clearly indicate a distinction in the degrees of suffering, yet they hold out no prospect of a termination of the state itself, or, of a final restitution and recovery.

In offering a few further remarks on this view of the question, in order to avoid circumlocution, and treading as little as possible over beaten ground, I shall briefly state the sentiments of two eminent divines, Dr. S. Clarke and Bishop Newton.

Dr. Clarke, in his great work on "The Evidences," &c., observes, that "No man can say it is unreasonable, that they who by wilful and stubborn disobedience to God, and unrepented wickedness, have, during the state of

trial, made themselves unfit for celestial happiness, should be eternally rejected and excluded from it." Bishop Newton, in his Treatise on Universal Restoration, says, "To suppose a man's happiness or misery to all eternity, should be absolutely and unchangeably fixed and determined by the uncertain behaviour of a few years in this life, is a supposition even more unreasonable and unnatural, than that a man's mind and manner should be completely formed and fashioned in his cradle, and his whole future fortune and condition depend altogether upon his infancy—infancy being much greater, in proportion to this life, than the whole of this life to eternity." He then proceeds to obviate any misconceptions which may arise in this view, as to the case of the righteous, whose state of future happiness hath been always justly regarded by the Christian Church as strictly and properly everlasting; stating his meaning only to be, that all created intelligences are comparatively imperfect, and necessarily fallible; but that the righteous having passed through a state of probation, sufficient, in the eye of Omnipotence, to have *formed a character*, and being now delivered from trial and temptation, and placed in a state of glorious reward and progressive improvement, under the more immediate auspices of the Almighty, their defection or apostacy will be *morally impossible*: but that it by no means follows, that a state of punishment, strictly eternal, will be the portion of the wicked, the two cases being so immensely different.

We need not stay to prove that the opinions of these two eminent men, on the latter topic, are as diametrically opposite, as the East is to the West; and, in any sober discussion, it is of great use, and serves to lessen our labour, to compare ideas so directly repugnant to one another, since, by the collision of discordant sentiments, truth is frequently struck out; as the conflicting elements purify the air, and at length unfold the beauties of creation in a bright and unclouded day.

Now, whoever examines this passage of Dr. Clarke's, (too long to quote,) will find that he hath not laboured the point with his usual precision and accuracy.

First, he takes for granted what is

to be proved; and reasons, from the supposed certainty of everlasting punishment, ("to many," as he allows, "a great difficulty, as it is certain from our natural notion of the attributes of God, that no man shall be punished beyond his deserts,") to the justice of the Deity: whereas, all legitimate reasoning is never from doubtful points to known and established truths, but always proceeds from known and established truths, to uncertain and doubtful points. We must acquire and frame the best ideas we can of the justice of God, and thence deduce and regulate our ideas of the nature of future punishment.

Again: because "we know little of the circumstances, or various uses of future punishment, which we are sure will be well and wisely ordered;" doth it follow, that we must be equally persuaded of its eternal continuance? Or, that a certain truth, and, at least, a doubtful proposition, rest upon the same ground? Because neither wise Heathens or Christians know, nor ever pretended "to determine, the period of the sufferings of the hitherto incorrigible;" that, therefore, they will have no period at all? Or, because glorified saints and rational beings in future worlds, may be justly supposed to contemplate the wicked, in a state of adequate and limited punishment, without painful emotions; that they may be supposed also, to contemplate them in *an eternal prison*, and bound in the chains of everlasting darkness and despair, with the same degree of tranquillity?

The mildest idea we can justly frame of future punishment, is that of a state in which the suffering exceeds the enjoyment: now, every negation implies something positive; thus, the negation of health, implies indisposition or sickness; of vice, virtue; of happiness, suffering or misery; and *vice versa*. The eternal negation of happiness must, therefore, even allowing for different degrees, be eternal unhappiness or misery. "Place me in Arabia," says a great writer, "separate from my friends, connexions and stated employments, and I shall be miserable!" How much more may this sentiment be applied to the moral delinquent in that awful state of separation, prepared indeed, not indeed by the vengeance, but by the *indictive justice* of the

Almighty, where, in the figurative language of Scripture, "their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched"! However lenient their immediate sufferings, the sense and forebodings of their never-ending duration, must gradually produce the most acute and tormenting impressions. Now, to think that the smallest offenders, who (by the mouth of truth itself) are to be beaten only "with few stripes," shall nevertheless continue in this state *for ever*; is to suppose that the Almighty Father of the universe, "who hateth nothing which he hath made," will finally disinherit those of his rational offspring, for comparatively slight offences, who might, probably, upon further trial, become faithful and obedient children; but, how can we believe this? Certainly, whatever we may think of the doctrine of *Athanasius*, of unconditional decrees, or of *Transubstantiation*—auricular confession, a visible, infallible head, pilgrimages, monkery and subordinate image worship, are nothing to it.

Perhaps it may be thought that we shall succeed better, if we reverse the picture.

Let us then suppose a character, compounded of every vice, in its highest possible aggravation: of the most brutal voluptuousness and sensuality, the most rapacious covetousness, the most intolerant pride and ambition, the most furious anger, the most savage cruelty, the most implacable revenge, the foulest envy and malignity, the most daring and blasphemous impiety. Suppose him, also, to be possessed of immense power, enabling him to execute his designs and purposes to a prodigious extent: in a word, a tyrant and oppressor of the first class; combining in his own person all the worst qualities of human nature, and utterly destitute of every thing excellent and praise-worthy; add to all this uninterrupted health and prosperity, and the years of an antediluvian: that is, suppose—an utter impossibility, an absolute chimera of the imagination—a being that never hath existed, does not now exist, nor ever will exist, at least in the present world. Were it possible that such a one could exist, it would be only for a short season; he would either fall by his own vices, by the just resistance of his subjects, by the jealousy of surrounding governments of

inferior iniquity, or by the daring hand of the assassin. Divine Justice would not suffer him to live. Yet, even of *this* flagitious character, reasoning upon supposition, we cannot affirm, consistently with rational and well-grounded ideas of the Divine perfections, that it would be *just* he should be punished to all eternity; because (speaking with reverence) we can conceive a limited degree of suffering sufficient to effect every necessary moral purpose of the Divine government; and because any assignable period of existence and of transgression, however protracted and aggravated, bears no proportion at all to an absolutely unlimited duration. And "what shall the man do that cometh after the king?" How can we affirm this of minor delinquents?

Perhaps it may be thought that simple justice regards only *the punishment* of the offender: this is not true, in many cases, as to *human* judgments; but rather the reverse: and even when the punishment is *final*, the soul of the victim is charitably recommended to the Almighty to obviate every idea of a *vindictive* sentence. *Torture*, thanks be to God, is nearly abolished in all well-regulated communities.

The necessity of *final* judgments in this world arises from the inherent imperfection of human governments. None can deny that if murderers, highwaymen, midnight robbers, base assassins and treasonable rebels, could be effectually prevented from repeating their atrocious crimes, by a more lenient sentence than that of death, it would be far more desirable, and accordingly some states have adopted plans of this kind. But the extreme uncertainty of accomplishing this end, and the dreadful consequences to society arising from their repetition; together with the permission of the Divine law in particular cases, have been generally regarded as sufficient reasons for a contrary practice.

But such arguments appear to be not applicable to the Divine judgments in a future state; because, though we are sometimes obliged to consider the attributes of the Deity, as it were, *singly*; yet, to form more correct and suitable ideas concerning them, we must view them in their complex or relative light, as they subsist in glorious union and harmony in the Divine nature.

And in this view of the subject, and reasoning from received and acknowledged ideas of the Divine perfections, it may further assist our reflections to observe, that *an abstract proposition* is either in itself plain and self-evident, or partly evident and partly inconceivable or doubtful; or, lastly, utterly repugnant to all our ideas and apprehensions. When I read, "There is no peace to the wicked," and "without holiness no man shall see the Lord," I conceive truths which require no laboured deductions of reason to establish them, and to produce a full conviction in the mind. When I read that God is eternal, omniscient and omnipresent, I perceive that it must be so, from the very nature of the subject, and because the contrary involves a contradiction; for "since something now is, something always was," and that must be *mind* and not matter, unchangeable and independent: moreover, if there was a time when he did not exist, he may also cease to exist; and a God who is not omniscient and omnipresent, is no Deity at all to any practical purpose; he can neither be a moral governor nor a final judge. But *how* he is eternal, or *in what manner* he is omniscient and omnipresent—these things I cannot comprehend. When it is inquired, Do the rewards and punishments of futurity commence immediately after death, or are they deferred till the resurrection? I hesitate—the nature of the soul is little known; revelation is not determinate upon this point; it is of little consequence in a religious view; pious, wise and inquiring men have differed much upon the subject. But when it is asked, Shall man be punished to all eternity by an all-wise, righteous and merciful Creator, for the sins of time? there is evidently nothing in the human breast consentaneous with this supposition, no string that vibrates in unison with this sentiment; on the contrary, when it is proposed, a divarication of ideas immediately takes place in the mind, which, the more they are attempted to be reconciled by force or by persuasion, *divaricate the more*: that is, we have similar sensations to those we should experience, if a professed philosopher were to assure us in the most solemn manner, that cold and heat, white and black, were the same; or a part of any thing equal

to the whole: we might admire his talents and be amused with his ingenuity, but should certainly conclude, that in this case he was either weak or wicked, or the slave of a system, or that "much learning had made him mad;" because, in the view of every plain understanding, these ideas are *disparates*, things directly opposed to one another, and which cannot possibly coincide or stand together. Now, there are *data* in theology, as well as in philosophy, clear and self-evident principles, partly obvious under the light of nature, and more fully ascertained and confirmed by the gospel; among which, those relating to the Deity are more especially to be cherished and maintained, as they lie at the very foundation of their religion.

AN OCCASIONAL READER.

SIR,

Bloxham.

1. **S**OME persons have attempted to prove the final purity and happiness of all mankind from reason: they have observed that the Supreme Being is infinitely wise, powerful and good, and our Creator, and therefore he can and will bring all the human race to a state of purity and everlasting happiness. But if this argument proves any thing, it proves too much; for, by the same mode of reasoning, we may prove it almost certain that every living creature, from the huge Leviathan to the smallest insect, will enjoy a happy immortality. But who that considers how universal nature swarms with life, will attempt to prove that, because God is their Creator, and can cause them to live for ever, that therefore he certainly will do it? If we were innocent beings, we could not claim this of our Maker, much less can sinners. And how do we know but that in the *vast* and *various* family of God, it may be very expedient to form some creatures only for a temporary existence? We, I presume, believe so concerning many numerous tribes of insects, and what are we but insects in the sight of our infinite Creator;

"Who sees, with equal eye, as God of all,
A hero perish, or a sparrow fall?"

2. Other persons assert that the Scriptures teach us this doctrine; they say that God is love; that he is merciful and gracious; that he delighteth not in the death of a sinner; that it is

his will that all men should be saved; that he retaineth not his anger for ever; and that our Saviour will reign until he hath put all his enemies under his feet. But it is obvious that a good sense may be put on these passages without carrying the matter so far, not to observe that many passages of Scripture seem to teach a contrary doctrine. This appears so evident to some able advocates of this doctrine, that they have expressed themselves as follows: "But I do not lay much stress on particular texts of Scripture in this case, because it does not appear to me to have been the proper object of the mission of Christ, or any other prophet, to announce this doctrine, nor does it appear that any of them considered the subject in its full extent."—Dr. Priestley's Discourse at Philadelphia on Acts xvii. 18—20. Mr. Madge says on this subject, "That the doctrine is expressly and designedly inculcated in any one passage of the Old or New Testament, does not appear to me ever to have been satisfactorily made out."—Mon. Repos. XIII. p. 562. Dr. Estlin, however, and Dr. Southwood Smith, have both attempted to prove that the wicked will be raised to life after they have suffered the second death, even supposing this sentence should be literally executed, and that therefore they will be made pure and immortal beings. Dr. Estlin observes that "a first resurrection is spoken of."—Estlin's Serm. p. 141. By which he evidently meant to suggest that there will be a second. And Dr. Smith says, in his work on the Government of God, p. 247, "and is directly asserted by several," (Scriptures,) "particularly by those which speak of a first resurrection; for a first resurrection implies a second."

Now, it should be observed, that a first resurrection is no where directly spoken of in Scripture, but in Rev. xx. 5, 6. What is said in 1 Thess. iv. 15, does not militate against this observation. This first resurrection is, by some persons, supposed to be a resurrection from the death of sin to the life of righteousness. But others suppose that it refers to the resurrection of the pious dead at the second coming of Christ, i. e. at the commencement of what is called the millenium, which is to take place at least a thousand years before the general

resurrection of the dead. Therefore, whether this first resurrection be understood in a spiritual or literal sense, it will take place a long time before the general resurrection of the dead; so that the first resurrection of the wicked at the last day, will be the second resurrection of the Holy Scriptures; and therefore, in order to prove that the wicked will be raised to life again, after having literally suffered the second death, it is necessary to prove that the Scriptures speak of a third resurrection of the dead, which, I suppose, no person is hardy enough to attempt.

3. I shall, therefore, take it for granted that the Scriptures say nothing decisively in favour of the universal restoration of mankind to purity and everlasting happiness. Now this silence of Scripture on a subject of such vast importance, is a very remarkable fact, and must probably arise from one or other of the two following causes:

1. It may arise from its not being a fact, that the whole human race will ever be made pure and happy. For is it credible that a doctrine of such vast moment, if true, should not have been revealed either in the Patriarchal, Jewish or Christian Scriptures? That a book so large as the Holy Bible is, written by so many different persons, in so many different ages of the world, and which contains a history of man from the beginning of time to the grand consummation of all things, should not plainly contain this very extraordinary doctrine, if it was determined on in the Divine mind, and his pleasure that we should believe it? That after so much has been written by holy and inspired men of God, that we should be left to reason and dubious inferences from revelation to prove the truth of it? Look, Sirs, at the Bible, and observe its magnitude, and recollect that the world was four thousand years old when the last part of it was written, and yet nothing directly, plainly or intentionally, it is acknowledged by some of its most able advocates, is said about it; that the subject does not appear to have designedly occupied their thoughts, or to have been a part of the mission of Jesus Christ, or of any prophet, to announce. And is this credible if the doctrine be founded in truth, and that it is the will

of God that we should be made acquainted with it? But,

2. It may, perhaps, be said that the silence of Scripture on this subject arises from the circumstance that the proper time to reveal it was not come when the canon of Scripture was closed; that knowledge is progressive; that the light of revelation is like the great light of heaven, that shines more and more unto the perfect day; that though each of the latter revelations of God to man is an advance on the previous ones, yet that the moral world was not prepared to receive this doctrine when the last of the sacred penmen wrote.

This is the most plausible defence that can be made in support of it, if it could be first proved that the Scriptures say nothing that absolutely makes against it. For it must appear very evident to every sensible and unprejudiced mind that is well acquainted with the world, that mankind have never yet been in a sufficiently enlightened and moral state to receive such a doctrine with advantage. Human beings are, in general, such ignorant, feeble, erring, sinful and strongly-tempted creatures, that if they knew for certain that the blessed God would make us all holy and happy at last; that though we should trifle away our present day of grace, that another and another would be granted, until our infinitely powerful and gracious Creator shall bring us all to repentance and reformation, and so to final happiness, they would become a much more easy prey to temptation than they are at present, which is by no means desirable. How many youths have probably been greatly injured, and not a few completely ruined, by their imprudent parents and friends informing them in very early life that their future fortune was made sure to them, and that they need not apply to business, or deny themselves of this or that pleasure like other men! And can that be wisdom in the Supreme Being that is extreme folly in man?

4. The true state of the case appears to be as follows: The reasons adduced in support of this subject are by no means sufficient to found so momentous a doctrine upon; not to say that many passages of Scripture seem to militate very much, if not decisively, against it; that if it be really true, that

the blessed God designs to bestow such a favour on the human race, that he is too wise and good a being to publish it at present to such ignorant, feeble, imperfect and wicked creatures as many of them are, plainly foreseeing that the information would be very injurious to them. For every thing there is a proper season. All this, be it observed, goes on the supposition that the blessed God intends to bestow such a favour on man; but that he does intend it, I dare not assert. The Scriptures inform us of the resurrection of all the dead; of the righteous being taken to heaven, and the wicked sent down to hell, to suffer the second death. When Adam was threatened with the first death, the serpent said, "Ye shall not surely die:" and so some persons now say concerning the wicked, that they will not for certain die a second time. But when I consider that the second death is threatened in terms perfectly similar to the first death, and that the first death is literally executed, I dare not say that the second will not be so too. This is the end of the line of revelation as it respects the wicked; all beyond is darkness, thick darkness, that may be felt by every considerate person. Here, therefore, I stop;—and he who dares to advance is a bold man, and in very great danger of stumbling, at the first step, on the dark mountains of ignorance.—We cannot make Scripture, or positively say what the Supreme Being will do with any of his creatures beyond what he has revealed to us. We had, therefore, better stop here, and wish and hope and pray, but assert nothing, but improve the light that we have, and wait patiently till the Father of Lights shall see proper to give us more.

Supposing we had been created on the first day of the world, and had been informed by an angel from heaven that the first six thousand years of this world would be spent by man in the manner we now know it has been, i. e. that war, famine, pestilence, ignorance, error, idolatry, vice, misery and death, would so much prevail through them; could we have believed that the infinitely wise, powerful and good God would ever have permitted so many evils to take place, and to continue so long? And if the evidence for the

truth of the prophecy had been irresistible, should we not have stood aghast—lost in wonder and awful amazement? And shall we then, with this knowledge of our ignorance of the government of God, be so imprudent as to say what will hereafter take place in cases of vast magnitude, which are not revealed to us? "Who by searching can find out God?" "His judgments are a mighty deep." "O the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" Rom. xi. 33.

Therefore, instead of preaching this doctrine, we should, if we take any notice of it, shew our hearers on what slight grounds it rests, and earnestly exhort them to improve their present day of grace, for that the Sacred Scriptures say nothing about a second state of probation; that "behold now is the accepted time; behold now is the day of salvation;" and should excite them to consider how awful the condition of those persons will be in a future state who were encouraged to sin here by the belief that there would be a second and a third state of trial hereafter, if they shall then discover that it was a fatal error; and that such unhappy persons will have great reason heavily to blame those who buoyed them up with such groundless hopes and unrevealed doctrines.—"When men tell us confidently such particularities as are not in the Sacred Story, we are to ask them whence they have their doctrine, and who revealed to them such particular supplements to the holy text."*

JOSEPH JEVANS.

SIR,

THE solemn scene exhibited Matt. xxv. 31—46, evidently relates to a period when the dominion of Christ will be established. At, or immediately after the destruction of Jerusalem, his *sign* is described as appearing in the *heaven*, and he is represented as *sending* "his angels to gather together his elect from the four winds," or, as Lightfoot interprets this passage, sending his disciples and selecting his

* John Worthington on the Millenium, p. 275.

Church from the Gentiles after Jerusalem shall be reduced to ashes, and the Jewish nation in general excluded from the Divine protection. This flourishing state of Christianity, while Jerusalem was reduced to utter desolation, immense numbers of its inhabitants having perished, and the residue of the people being dispersed and pining in captivity throughout the Roman empire, in conformity with the predictions of Christ and the ancient prophets, must greatly contribute to promote the belief and increasing influence of his gospel. Whole societies of Christians were formed in many principal cities, and the knowledge of their principles were diffusing in all quarters, while "*not a stone upon a stone*" of the Jewish temple was left remaining—precisely as Jesus had predicted. These circumstances constituted the *sign of his coming*. But if the predicted "*sign of the Son of Man in heaven*," his being "*seen coming in the clouds of heaven*," and his "*sending forth his angels with a great sound of a trumpet*," indicate the circumstances attending the first promulgation of his gospel, and the calamities of the Jewish nation in consequence of its rejection, it is reasonable to conclude that a corresponding interpretation applies to his actual arrival "*with all his holy angels*" when he will be "*seated upon the throne of his glory*."

On this occasion, *all nations* are described as actually gathered before him, consisting, of course, of characters of various descriptions, but which he separates into two classes; those whose sympathies are congenial with his own, and those who have no sympathies in common with him. And it appears evident that while the first class of persons, in proportion as they are actuated by those sympathies, either are, or may easily be, rendered the subjects of his kingdom, the latter, in proportion to their want of such sympathies, are inadmissible into it. In the interval between the introduction of his gospel and its final prevalence, represented in the preceding parable of "*a man travelling into a far country*," his doctrine, like leaven, diffuses its influence; but the popularity of his *name* extending with greater rapidity than the genuine knowledge and spirit of his instructions, nominal

Christians have increased, and nominal churches risen up and flourished, much faster than individuals and societies of real Christians. Many also may have cultivated dispositions congenial with Christianity, to whom it was never revealed. But all persons may be distinguished either by their actual conformity to the gospel, by dispositions congenial with its dictates, or by their propensities to conform to the principles and requisitions of authorities different from, and adverse to it, and whose influence must impair or destroy their sympathy for every person and every thing connected with true Christianity. These authorities, or the antichristian characteristics appertaining to them, appear to be designated by "*the Devil and his angels*."

Bishop Newton observes, that "*the Roman empire is prefigured by the attributes of 'the great red dragon,' Rev. xii. 3;*" and, on ver. 9, he adds, that "*our Saviour said unto his disciples, casting devils (demons) out of the bodies of men, Luke x. 18, 'I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.'*" In the same figure, Satan fell from heaven, and was cast out into the earth, when he was thrust out of the imperial throne, "*and his angels were cast out with him;*" not only the Heathen priests and officers, civil and military, were cashiered, but their very gods and demons, who before were adored for their divinity, became the subjects of contempt and execration." The Bishop appears, indeed, to have believed in the existence of a potent, invisible spirit from which this symbol of the dragon was taken: but is there any more reason to believe in a real personage of this description, than in spiritual beings corresponding with the other beasts described in the Apocalypse, and which interpreters are agreed in regarding as merely emblematical of ruling authorities on earth?—In Rev. xix., a most destructive battle is described between "*the King of kings and the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies*," the result of which was, that "*the beast and the false prophet were taken and cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone*." Can this lake of fire signify any other than the battle and its result, by which these principles of oppression and delusion were overcome and destroyed? When this is compared with

Isaiah lxvi. 15, 16 and 24, does it not appear that these two passages relate to events of a very similar nature, if not to the very same? In the latter, "*flames of fire*" is manifestly a figure denoting destructive warfare, and in the former, *the lake of fire* is so intimately connected with, or rather so descriptive of, the destruction effected by a most decisive engagement, of the complete conquest of the tyrannizing principles or corrupt governments prefigured by animals, that it can scarcely be understood in any sense materially different. Into this *same* lake of fire, we read, chap. xx. 16, that the devil himself was afterwards injected, in consequence of another destructive warfare, of which he was the instigator, that is, he underwent the same utter destruction, as the result of the same line of conduct, in "*deceiving the nations*," that had been practised by the beast and the false prophet. The lake of fire into which they are represented as being *actually precipitated* in the Apocalypse, can be no other than "*the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels*," Matt. xxv. 41. That this *will* be an everlasting fire with respect to these emblematical personages, (understanding by the phrase, utter and interminable destruction, as in the case of Sodom and Gomorrah,) is probable from the very strong terms employed in the several passages, and accords with the very nature of moral evil, which is necessarily of temporary duration. They are principles of "*deception*," but deception can last but for a time; its removal must both enable and dispose its former victims to a change of conduct. Into the same lake of fire, however, "*whosoever was not found written in the Lamb's book of life, was thrown*;" and it must necessarily be the case that the agents and instruments of tyranny and warfare must be sufferers by their misdeeds; must "*have their part*" in the calamities consequent on the overthrow of those corrupt civil and ecclesiastical establishments to which they gave their support, and on which they reposed their confidence, often in opposition to the claims of Christianity.

The parable relating immediately to the downfall of corrupt governments and the establishment of the kingdom of Christ on earth, with its conse-

quences to individuals, makes no express mention of a resurrection from the dead; but as "*the Father hath given to the Son to have life in himself*," so it is highly probable he will proceed to exercise his authority when thus arrived at its plenitude, by realizing this glorious and awful event. In this general view of his judgments, he appears to glance at the whole concluding subject of the Apocalypse, from chap. xix. to the end of chap. xxi., which also coincides remarkably with several particulars in the concluding chapter of Isaiah, the last verse of which contains the very images of the *undying worm* and the *unquenchable fire* applied to dead bodies slaughtered in battle, which Jesus several times employed in describing the fate of transgressors. The scenes represented Rev. xx. 4-6, 11-15, seem to prefigure the resurrection, both to "*life*" and to "*judgment*." Transgressors are not only exempted from the blessings of the first resurrection, but are in the closing scene of this representation subjected to a "*second death*" by being cast into "*the lake of fire*." The consequences of their adherence to tyranny and superstition, and their opposition to Christian truth, meekness and benignity, will follow them beyond the grave, according to their different degress of guilt, from mere timidity and unbelief, to murder and idolatry; chap. xx. 8. Their personal identity being preserved, the consequences of their former habits will be felt, if it be but in the complete privation of all those sources of vitiated enjoyment which they derived from their attachment to the principles of evil, and their want of those dispositions which are congenial with the Divine government. Thus the lake of fire will, as it were, follow them into their renewed existence; all remaining evil, both moral and natural, must be totally destroyed before the kingdom of God and his Christ can be fully realized.* This appears in the distinct mention of the destruction of all the emblematical personages, representing moral and natural evil in succession. The mutual ejection of death and hades, with those who were not written in the book of life, into the

* See Rev. xxi. 27.

fire, is a figure which can be fully explained only by the event. Does it not emphatically denote the destruction of that "*last enemy*? The subjects upon whom this destruction will be performed are human offenders, but the great objects to be destroyed are the evils in which they are involved. For these the fire is prepared; it is they which remain in it for ever and ever. "*Every man's work will be tried of what sort it is.*" "*If any man's work be burnt, he shall suffer loss, but he himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire.*" But in the end, God "shall wipe away all tears from men's eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away." Glorious consummation! May the anticipation of it fill our hearts and characterise our lives with devout gratitude and love.

E. S.

SIR,
THOUGH you may not have the polished writer in a Traveller, you have one who is anxious to promote the truth as it is in Jesus. I will tell you, at the request of two others, whose faith is much like my own, how we fill up our time. When we meet, we read either the Repository or Reformer, and they furnish us subjects for conversation, and often hints, as we think, for improvement. I will mention some we last discussed: The duty of travellers to strive to reach a place where they could worship comfortably on a Sunday. We enumerated the bad effects we had seen in professed Unitarians going to no place of worship, or going where their pious feelings were not excited, but something of disgust called forth. We regretted that many places we visited had Unitarians residing there, but no social worship kept up. If that practice is continued, a great bar is put to the spread of knowledge and the increase of devotion. We spoke of the benefit of a contrary conduct at Thorne, at Falmouth, and lately at Somers Town. We are not divines, yet we see no objection to religious services being conducted by tradesmen; and we remember once at Ipswich hearing an excellent Sermon read, and Dr. Priestley's prayers delivered in a pious way,

by a person whom on the Monday we found behind the counter. Where ministers cannot be supported, local preachers (to use the term of the Methodists) should be encouraged. That plan has been of great use to the Methodist cause, and must be resorted to by Unitarians if they wish to spread their opinions. It is a pity in all places where there are two ministers, that the districts around are not endeavoured to be enlightened, as is done at Liverpool and in the neighbourhood of Portsmouth. The regular ministers might be assisted by those who have not had an academical education. The reading of the Scriptures and expounding them; the reading of prayers or extemporary prayers; the reading of a sermon, or the explanation of some doctrine, might be carried on by one or by more, who might agree to undertake in turns to conduct the service. Whenever fixed ministers can attend, let them shew their approbation and give their help. This seems to us to have been the plan of the apostles, and we wish Unitarians to recommend what they teach by their lives and conversation being according to the gospel. If these hints be deemed worthy of your notice, and they are inserted in your Repository, we shall be encouraged to make farther remarks; and one of my fellow-travellers thinks of pointing out some places where he considers what I now send might be usefully applied.

A TRAVELLER.

Cambridge,
June 2, 1820.

SIR,
I LEARN from your Review of the Life of the Rev. Wm. Richards, that some of the Dissenters of this country accept American academical titles. Considering the state of literature and science in the United States, this surprises me not a little. I am prompted to ask, what must be the rank of Dissenting dignitaries, when "Brown University, in Rhode Island," can confer an honour upon them? But perhaps my notions and habits acquired in this place, make me fastidious in these matters, and I ought to have known human nature better than to be so easily betrayed into wonderment:

"For never title yet so mean could prove,
But there was eke a mind which did that title love."

I write, Sir, purely for information; and any of your Correspondents will oblige me who will instruct me how many of the titled Dissenting divines derive their honours from the United States; what mints of academic dignity there are besides "Brown University in Rhode Island;" whether Columbia in Carolina, Louisville in Ohio, Onion-Point in Indiana, Big-Creek in Missouri, &c. transmit diplomas into Great Britain; and how many years lands must be reclaimed from the Chickesaws or Cherokees in order to qualify them to manufacture literary patents of honour.

Another question, Sir, and I have done: your Dissenting ministers are, as appears from their late Address and their reception at Court, *κατ'εξοχην*, loyal: but I have always understood that it is a constitutional principle that the King is the fountain of honours in Great Britain, and that no titles can be lawfully assumed here which do not flow from the Crown, immediately or through the channel of some establishment under a Royal charter. If I am correct in this principle, it must be inconsistent with his oath of allegiance for any British subject to take, without the King's special license, a foreign title or degree, and any one doing so is guilty of *petty treason*.

I startle, however, at my own conclusion, and, eagerly awaiting help in my difficulty, hastily subscribe myself,
CIS-ATLANTICUS.

Essex House,
Sir, June 6, 1820.

I CANNOT think that my objections against visiting Unbelievers with the pains and penalties of the law, are in the least degree invalidated by the observations of your ingenious and learned Correspondent Hylas.

1. I see not the shadow of contradiction in asserting the expedience of an interposition of the civil power to encourage the promulgation of the Christian religion, and denying its right to punish Unbelievers and scoffers at religion. It is one thing to establish a professorship for teaching mathematics, and allowing premiums to proficient in that sublime and useful science, and another to inflict penalties upon those who dislike the science, or who ignorantly declaim against it as useless and dangerous. And the same

principle is applicable to the subject of religion.

2. I do not think that Hylas has proved that our Lord's precepts, to bless those that curse, and to pray for those who despitefully injure and calumniate, are intended to be limited to the infant and suffering state of the church. On the contrary, it appears to me dishonourable to our Lord's character to prohibit retaliation only while retaliation is impossible, and to allow it when his disciples became possessed of power.

3. Nothing can promote the cause of infidelity so much as visiting the impugners, and even the blasphemers of the Christian religion, with the penalties of law. Can any thing be more disgraceful than to bind a man hand and foot and then offer to fight him? Is it not mean and pitiful in the extreme, first to throw a man into jail and suppress his writings, and then pretend to reply to his arguments? What must be the conclusion which any one who has the sense and feelings of a man would naturally draw from such premises? Such absurd conduct is really no better than a contrivance to rouse the best feelings of our nature in favour of a bad cause. No, Sir, let scepticism have fair play; let the infidel do his worst; let him attack God's sacred Truth, not only with his arguments, but with his calumnies and his revilings—Truth, invincible Truth, laughs at his puny efforts, and scorns his malice and his rage. For a time, indeed, they may appear to produce some effect, but in the end Truth, if left to her own energies, will be completely victorious. No one who possesses a just confidence in the omnipotence of Truth can doubt her ultimate success.

4. The Christian religion can never be purified from its grossest corruptions, unless infidel writers are allowed their full scope. Christianity is a plain and simple doctrine: it teaches that God will judge the world in righteousness, by the man whom he hath ordained, of which he hath given assurance to all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead. It requires to love God with all the heart, and to love our neighbour as ourselves. These are plain, simple, sublime practical truths and precepts; incapable of being distorted or turned into ridicule; and

rarely, indeed, is it that the Unbeliever points his artillery at them. But these primary truths are in the prevailing systems of Christianity, so mixed up with error and absurdity, that the Unbeliever regards, or pretends to regard them as inseparable: and as one part cannot be true, he pretends that the whole is false. And he attacks Christianity through the corruptions which are blended with it, and often with too much success. When, therefore, a bold Infidel declaims against the Christian religion, and represents it as a system of delusion and fraud, instead of burning his books and throwing the hapless author into prison, and then pretending to answer his work by returning reviling for reviling, the proper though not altogether the easiest method would be, to inquire how far the charges are just—to separate the gold from the dross, Christianity from its corruptions, what is defensible from what is indefensible, and thus to shew that true Christianity is a gem of unspeakable value: that it contains nothing unreasonable, nothing mean, nothing contemptible; but that it is a doctrine of great moral importance, which every wise and good man must at least wish to be true.

Had Paine's Age of Reason been treated in this manner, I am fully convinced that it would not have done a tenth part of the mischief of which it is now said to have been productive. And Hylas must pardon me if I dissent from him in attributing much of the Infidelity of the French nation, and the miseries of the late Revolution, to the restraint imposed upon freedom of inquiry. The fact is, that so many persons seriously believe the gross errors which are mixed up with the Christian doctrine, and so many more are interested in supporting them, that it is found much easier to ruin the author than to reply to his arguments. Poor Bishop Smallridge's exclamation, "I dare not inquire, I dare not inquire," is the true principle of the generality of those who would rather persecute than reason. In France the publications of Infidels were connived at. But had a Protestant advocate attempted a reply, and shewn how utterly inapplicable their objections were to genuine Christianity, though unanswerable as applied to its gross corruptions, he would have been sent to the galleys.

Finally: if persecution is once allowed, it is impossible to set definite limits to its progress. In this Hylas agrees with me, and candidly acknowledges "the objection to be unanswerable." Nor do I think he has succeeded happily in *eluding* its force. When I consider the malignant cavils, the low scurrility of some late infidel writers, I confess I feel very indignant, and am ready to call out for the arm of the law to restrain, not argument, but abuse and ribaldry. But I check myself. None but writers of the lowest order can indulge themselves in these base attacks, and none but readers of the worst character can be affected by them. And they are easily repelled. But once allow that a man may justly be punished for reviling the Christian religion, and you open as wide a door to persecution, as the grand Inquisitor himself can wish. For as every bigot includes his own absurdities among the essentials of Christianity, and the more absurd the more essential, every attack upon even the grossest of the corruptions of Christianity would, in its turn, be exclaimed against as blasphemy against Christianity itself and an iniquity to be punished by the judge. Upon this principle to call transubstantiation impious would be blasphemy, to say that purgatory is a fraud would be blasphemy, and to call Athanasianism nonsense would be blasphemy. Hylas's doctrine, therefore, of the right of magistrates to punish Unbelievers, appears to me to assume too much: and I conclude, that a doctrine which by plain and direct inference leads to such injurious consequences cannot possibly be true.

T. BELSHAM.

P. S. Some of your worthy Correspondents, whose zeal seems to outrun their information, appear to be desperately angry with me for having presumed to assert that Christianity might be benefited by the liberal and judicious support of the civil power: and with true polemic logic they have argued, or rather declaimed, as if I had maintained, that because the interference of the civil power may be expedient in some forms and in a limited degree, it is, therefore, justifiable in every form and in every degree. To a triumph so obtained they are welcome. In the mean time, it is no inconsidera-

ble satisfaction to reflect, that whatever may be the opinions of a few *lay-nonconformists*, I cannot fail to possess the unanimous concurrence of my *reverend brethren*, who all thankfully accept the exemptions and privileges allowed by law to Protestant Dissenting ministers, which they never would do, if they regarded such an acceptance as inconsistent with the rules and spirit of the gospel, and with the great principle of Protestant Dissent. They cannot, therefore, deny that *quoad hoc*, it is lawful for the civil power to support Christianity, and that Christianity is benefited thereby. This admission concedes the principle, which is all that I contend for. As to the mode, or quantum of support, that is quite another question, concerning which, the differences of opinion may be endless.

The Nonconformist.

No. XVIII.

Observations on Mahometanism, &c.

(Concluded from p. 266.)

THUS far we have reviewed the rise and progress of this singular faith, this new system of tyranny over the consciences of mankind, and shall expect to find it, in its turn, debased from what purity it originally possessed, by the traditions of officious interpreters, each anxious to make the base coin of his own imagination pass current as genuine truth, and by the weight of ceremonial observances and other abuses, protected by the state to gratify the avarice and bigotry of its servants; we shall expect to find it distracted by contending sects, each zealous to prove his faith divine, by transgressing every principle of humanity, which the religion of nature, as well as of revelation, has consecrated in the heart of man, and we shall, to a considerable extent, find our expectations realized. Indeed, the establishment of a state religion seems necessarily to produce the evils which it pretends to be designed to prevent, namely, disturbance of the peace and order of society. Its first effort is to prevent the progress of opinion and that march of intellect which must go on in spite of its exertions, while the restriction of any of the honours of the state to a favoured class stimu-

lates, on the one hand, the possessors of them to oppression and to the support of opinions, not for truth but profit; and, on the other, prompts those who have the mark of distrust affixed to them, to become disaffected, and to struggle to redress their real or supposed injuries by violence and aggression. One powerful cause has, however, interposed to render the disputes of the rival teachers of Mahometan law less acrimonious, or at least attended with less fatal consequences than usual—Mahomet instituted no order of priests to embroil mankind in cruel wars to support their interested prejudices, under the pretence of zeal for the cause of religious truth; and I believe it will be found that persecution for difference of opinion, although its shades are innumerable, has been rare, unless on political grounds.

There has, indeed, of late years, under the Turkish government, been a more direct incorporation of a body much resembling a clergy, to whom considerable power is now entrusted. Mahomet and his successors, the Saracen Caliphs, held in their hands the undivided spiritual and temporal authorities: there were, and are still, (as I have before observed,) no persons who can properly be called priests; "those who have employment at the mosques have no distinguishing mark to make them known from others, nor any character which exempts from the obligations of other citizens. They have wives, they work and they pay taxes. The order of priesthood, which in all other religions forms a separate class in the state, and of which the members are looked upon as mediators between God and man, does not at all exist. All men are equal before their Creator, and the temples have no places reserved for any one, or privileged." * But under the Turks, a species of hierarchy has been formed by the separation of the concerns of religion from the usual temporal authorities, and vesting them in the body, which is called the Ulemah, and consists of the Imans or ministers of religion, the doctors of the law, or Muftis and the ministers of justice, called Cadis. In this council the grand

* Ali Bey.

Mufti seems to have the principal influence. Its power is great, when we consider that it has the sole office of interpreting the Koran, and that that book is the foundation of municipal law as well as religious doctrine. Their *Fetrah* must sanction every law before it can be binding, and the Sultan can no otherwise controul it, than by removing the Mufti, and promoting the inferior members; but the esprit de corps, in the main, operates to make the Ulemah a powerful check, which he would not find it safe to resist. *

It is not necessary, nor would there be any interest in here entering into any detail of the principles and histories of the various sects which have from time to time exercised the pens, the tongues and the swords of the followers of the Prophet. Their interpretations of the Koran, their disputes about free-will and predestination, the authority of the Idiamayumeth, or the glosses and legal decisions of the first disciples of the Apostle, and the Keyass, or collections of canonical decisions of the Imams-mudjithids or interpreters of the first ages of the Mahometan religion, can have little interest for persons to whom it is of no consequence to determine whether the doctrines of the Shiites or followers of Ali be more or less orthodox, or more or less absurd, than the Sonnites or sect of Omar. † But it is at least important, with relation to our views of religious establishments, to observe, that the greater part of the misery and distress which these conflicting interests have occasioned, has arisen most undoubtedly from the intimate connexion of spiritual and political concerns in the mosque. ‡

This is peculiarly the case in the disputes between the grand rival sects of Sonnites and Shiites; the latter maintaining the high doctrine of indefeasible hereditary right, in all the pride of bigotry, and, in consonance with this principle, contending for the title of the line of Ali, to the Caliphate, in opposition to Abu Beker, Omar and Othman, whom it stigmatizes as usurpers; the former maintaining that the nomination of spiritual and temporal chiefs is a power which can only reside in those who are to be governed—upon which political diffi-

rence have for some time been grafted the interminable disputes about that fruitful source of absurdities and corruption to the Mahometan Church, the Sonna, or book of traditions of the Prophet, amounting only to 7275, on which the true believer may rely as genuine, being selected only 200 years after his death, by the careful hand of Al Boukari, from 100,000 of a doubtful, and 200,000 of a spurious character.*

The Persians have adopted, it is well known, the Shiite faith, the Turks, the Sonnite; and, as Mr. Mills observes, no wars which ever desolated the Christian world have caused more bloodshed, or been more strongly stamped with the character of implacable animosity, than have the politico-religious controversies of these sectaries.

As a specimen of the controversial writings of these parties, a Turkish Mufti, in a book of denunciation against the tutor of a Sophi of Persia, (after reprobating the enormities of his sect, and among the rest their outrageous blasphemy in wearing the holy colour *green* on their shoes, and, what was worse, their breeches,) thus concludes: "In short, ye are the kennel of all sin and uncleanness—Christians or Jews may hope to become true believers, but as for you Persians, it is impossible; wherefore, by virtue of the authority I have received from Mahomet, I pronounce it lawful for any one, of what nation soever of true believers, to kill, destroy and extirpate you. And I hope that the majesty of God, in the day of judgment, will condemn you to be the asses of the Jews, to be rode and hackneyed in hell by that contemptible people."†

In the present day, however, the Persians, as well as some of the ablest of the Sonnite Doctors, have mitigated their religious prejudices, cease to call their erring brethren infidels, and admit that "they are believers, because they recognize the holy mission of Mahomet and worship God." The present distinct definement of the political re-

* For the supernatural assistance called to the performance of this holy work, see the article Boukari, in D'Herbelot and Mills, 326. The latter refers to a similar instance in the history of Christian Traditions, as told in Porson's Letters to Travis, (p. 379,) concerning the Epistle of Leo the Great to Flavianus, on the Incarnation.

† Thomson's Travels, 1744, II. 269.

* Mills, 398. Edin. Rev. VIII. 44.

† Edin. Rev. VIII. 41. ‡ Mills, 327.

tations of the rival parties may, perhaps, be considered as accounting, with some probability, for their relenting from their ancient asperity.

The comparative indifference which has been often observed to be not at all uncommon among the more enlightened of the Moslem nations, to the observance in their full rigour of the formal observances and distinctions of their fathers, has doubtless contributed to the spread of some small portion at least of charity, between rival sects; and if such feelings once exist to any extent, the periodic pilgrimages, where the various nations of the earth, professing in the main the same faith, meet to perform together the most sacred offices of their religion, must have a great tendency to increase their influence. "It is here," says Ali Bey, "that the grand spectacle of the pilgrimage of Mussulmen must be seen; an innumerable crowd of men from all nations, and of all colours, coming from the extremities of the earth, through a thousand dangers, and encountering fatigues of every description to adore together the same God, the God of nature. The native of Circassia presents his hand in a friendly manner to the Ethiopian or the negro of Guinea; the Indian and the Persian embrace the inhabitant of Barbary and Morocco; all looking upon each other as brothers, as individuals of the same family, united by the bands of religion, and the greater part speaking or understanding more or less the same language, the language of Arabia. No! there is not any religion that presents to *the senses* a spectacle more simple, affecting and majestic! Philosophers of the earth, permit me, Ali Bey, to defend my religion, as you defend spiritual things from those which are material, the plenum against a vacuum, and the necessary existence of the creation! Here is no intermediary between man and the Divinity; all are equal before their Creator! All are intimately persuaded that their works alone reconcile them to, or separate them from, the Supreme Being, without any foreign hand being able to change the order of immutable justice! What a curb to sin! What an encouragement to virtue! But what a misfortune that, with so many advantages, we should not be better than the Calvinists!"

While the Mahometan doctors, how-

ever, were debating points, which can only equal in their importance, at least in their eyes, those which agitated their Christian predecessors, when Islâm first arose in an obscure corner to call them to graver considerations; while the contending merits of the orthodox rituals, the Hanifi, Shaffi, Hanbali and Maleki, were yet unsettled, and the mystery of the 99 epithets of the Deity yet unravelled; while the respective admirers of the 280 canonical Mufessirs vied in their admiration of their respective commentaries on the Koran, and the 235 disputed Articles of the Creed could still hardly be said, after the labour of ages, to be plain to the brightest capacity; while it was not yet even certain that the Prophet's steed Borak had a peacock's tail and a woman's face;—a sect arose, whose history and peculiar opinions have in fact given rise to these observations, and who, of course, excited the full weight of indignation and deadly hatred of the court and church, as opposers of the corruptions of the faith and the ceremonials which had taken place of the spirit of their religion, and impugnors of the authority under which the successors of the Commander of the Faithful claimed to lord it over the consciences and properties of those whom fate had subjected to their tyranny. I allude to the sect of the Wahhabites, of whose history I can here merely give an outline; but whose principles of religious reform cannot but excite our interest, from their general rationality and simplicity, and from the circumstance of their taking their rise in, and owing their subsequent support to, the same spot and the same class of persons, among whom the faith of Mahomet originally arose.

The arid province of Nedjed, the centre of Arabia, was not only the cradle of Islamism, but the country where, in after ages, its doctrines remained most exempt from adulteration. Its roving tribes had no intercourse with strangers, and were too far removed from all foreign influence to receive the infection of new and heretical doctrines. The text of the Prophet was their only rule, the desert their only temple, and the Schaik or leader of each tribe its only Imam. They transmitted the Koran to their posterity, as they had received it from their ancestors, in all its primitive pu-

city, unchanged by explanations, and unperturbed by comments.* At length the abhorrence and contempt which they entertained for superstitious dogmas and observances, superadded to the ancient faith, penetrated into the hilly and fertile districts of Ared, and these being formed into a system by the hand of a bold and enlightened Reformer, became the Creed, zealously adopted and fearlessly maintained, of a body of men, as extraordinary as those who, under the banners of Mahomet, with more propitious circumstances gave law to the world.

Their founder, Abdool-Wahhab, appears to have been born in the environs of Medina, and to have proceeded to study under the principal Moslem Doctors at Bassora and Bagdad, and afterwards at Damascus, where he first began to express his distaste of the superstitious principles and practices which had been engrafted on, what he considered, the pure and simple principles of Islamism, and only formed an unnecessary and arbitrary burden on religion.

Alarmed at the tendency of his doctrine, the guardians of the orthodoxy of the church raised a popular outcry against him, and he was obliged to fly, but appears to have every where publicly avowed and defended the purity, excellency and orthodoxy of his tenets. He bent his course towards his own country; but where could he expect to find a spot congenial to his objects? Medina and Mecca were deeply interested in maintaining, to their full extent, the ancient rites and ceremonies from which they drew their riches, and they therefore opened no field to the Reformer; but the simple Arabs of the Eastern countries received him and embraced his doctrine with eagerness, and here it spread rapidly, so that from 1747, his reform may be considered as firmly established.

The first grand principle of the Wahhabite faith is to reduce the whole system of religion to its pristine simplicity, by purging it of all the peculiar doctrines and traditionary fables which have been added to it since the days of its founder, and to confine it to the literal text of the Koran. With regard to the Koran itself, as it now exists,

it appears to me that they reduce very much of the importance and sanctity which is attached to it by the orthodox, and this is necessarily the consequence of the different light in which they view the Prophet himself, whom they appear not to scruple to charge with himself corrupting the truths he was commissioned to enforce.

The accounts given by different authors of the precise opinions of the Wahhabites are in general so vague, and in many cases so contradictory, that it is difficult to form a very precise idea of them; but as far as I can collect, after examining and balancing nearly all, the following seems a tolerably correct outline of at least the philosophy of their system:

They are, of course, (like all other professors of Islamism,) firm supporters of the simple Unity of God, whom they consider as immaterial, eternal and omnipotent, and in their prayers to whom they are exceedingly fervent and devout. His existence they say is sufficiently manifested by his works, and his will cannot be mistaken, since he has implanted the distinct perception of right and wrong in the human mind, together with the conviction that virtue alone can be agreeable to the Author of nature. They do not, therefore, allow of the necessity nor existence of any written code of moral law dictated by God to man, nor do they believe that he has made any particular revelation of himself; but they admit that he has occasionally interfered in the concerns of mortals, in an extraordinary manner, and that he has chosen, and inspired for that purpose, certain instruments to promote the general cause of truth, and to lead mankind on its pursuit of virtue and happiness;—that some men, therefore, have been honoured with divine commissions, such as Adam, Noah, Abraham, the Hebrew Prophets, Jesus Christ, and lastly and more particularly Mahomet, whom they consider the last true Prophet and Missionary of God. They confine their veneration of these holy messengers to the immediate object of their missions; they forbid all kind of devotion to their persons, considering them as no more than other men, before God made use of them to communicate to the world his divine word, and that beyond the immediate objects of their missions, they were mere ordinary mortals, al-

* The reader will see that I borrow the substance at least of these sentences from Anastasius, Vol. III.

though deserving of high honour and imitation for their piety. All the authority of these prophets, being thus strictly confined to the objects of their missions, should undoubtedly cease at any rate with their lives; for that Providence, by withdrawing them from the scene of their labours, shews its design of thenceforth furthering its plans for the training of mankind to knowledge and virtue, by other means and other instruments. And as the Supreme Being neither has nor can have any participator in his power, these Reformers contend, that to allow to Mahomet, or any other of the departed saints, any superintendence over the affairs of man, or any power to render him aid hereafter, is blasphemy. Their confession of faith is, "There is no other God than God alone; there are no companions near him; to him belong dominion and praise and life and death, and he is Lord over all."

Abdool-Wahhab never offered himself as a prophet divinely commissioned, or claimed any miraculous powers, as has been by some asserted. He only acted as a zealous Reformer, who was desirous of bringing religion to the test of reason, and of purifying its worship of all the senseless superstitious mummeries, with which the Imams, interpreters and doctors had encumbered what he considered its primitive simplicity. In his ideas on this subject he was not singular; many a well-informed Mussulman had long secretly despised these superstitions, and though he seemed, in the eyes of the multitude, to respect and pay an external conformity to them, in his heart looked less to the ceremonial and dogmatic peculiarities of his faith than to the general and purer principles of Theism, which alone seemed calculated to become universal. "We," said the Arabs of the desert, among whom, as we before observed, Islamism has always maintained its purity, "we have no water, how then can we make ablutions? We have no money, how then can we give alms? The fast of Ramadan is an useless command to persons who fast all the year round, and if God be every where, why go to Mecca to adore him?"* But Abdool-Wahhab was the first who openly and

boldly denounced the superstitions of his countrymen as impious and ridiculous.

In opposition to the orthodox Mussulman who believes that after the death of Mahomet, his soul, reunited to his body, was carried to heaven on the mare of Gabriel, the Reformer taught that the bones of the Prophet rested in his sepulchre. The tombs of the Prophet and his immediate successors were consecrated with the most devout reverence, and made a source of gain by the craft of the church; but the Wahhabite despises this folly and knavery, and has thrown down their high places, and forbidden pilgrimages to them. The saints (amongst whom most unaccountably the Mussulman crowd generally reckons the fool or the idiot, who, as Ali Bey observes, is looked upon as the favourite of God, because he has refused him good sense) were accustomed to be interred in chapels or temples, to which crowds flocked to testify their devotion; but the Reformers have destroyed all within their reach, declaring that the worship of the saints is a grievous sin, as giving companions to the Divinity. They continue to preserve the usages of circumcision, ablution, &c., which they found established, but they consider all these outward observances as founded on expediency and usage, not on faith, and they have carried their disregard of traditionary lore so far as actually to erase that precious tuft of hair, which the true believer cherishes, as an assistance to the labour of the angel of light, who is to bear him to paradise.

Our estimation of the purity and value of these opinions, is much lowered by the knowledge of the vehemence and cruelty with which they are said to have been, in many instances, propagated by the powers who took the new faith under their protection. These seem, however, to have been in many respects greatly exaggerated. Ali Bey and Major Waring, both competent observers and eye-witnesses, (the first having been in Mecca when they took possession of it,) bear their testimony—the one to their "reason and moderation," the other to their "honesty and humanity," and surely such evidence ought to have great weight. It does not appear that Abdool-Wahhab himself or his son Moolah-Mohammed, ever appeared in the character of a military leader, or in

* Niebuhr's *Descrip. de l'Arabie*, pp. 16—24; Volney's *Voyage en Syrie*, &c. l. 380, quoted by Mills, 375.

any other capacity than that of the public advocate of the new doctrines. They were, however, taken under the protection of Ibu-Saoud, the supreme ruler of Ared, who adopted their system as the established religion of his rising dominion, became its temporal chief, and sought to build upon it the more solid and tempting edifice of political power. The orthodox sect was supported by despotic force: it was allied to a government arbitrary in all its movements, and to *think* for themselves, it was necessary for the supporters of heresy to *act* for themselves. In the East, the form of government appears, from experience, to be almost necessarily what is called Patriarchal, and the command of the Ruler must be implicitly obeyed, whether in matters of religious or civil obligation; what resource, therefore, would there be for the Wahhabites but to oppose force by force, if they wished to preserve their independence? They have, however, done more than this, and have shewn most abundantly that whatever portion of the alloy they rejected from the Prophet's system, they adhered most zealously to the worst feature of the Establishment, which founded itself on his authority—the principle of making converts, not by argument, but the sword.

It is doubtful whether the Wahhabites have preserved the purity or acted up to the spirit of the doctrine of their Founder. From all that can be gathered from the works of modern travellers, it appears that they have adopted many of the superstitions against which the Reform seemed expressly aimed, and the cause has, as might be expected, been made in the end subservient to the ambitious projects of its temporal leaders.

Their progress was very rapid towards the end of the last century. Ibu-Saoud, the temporal pastor and zealous propagator of the new opinions, was succeeded by Abdelaziz, who, at the head of a powerful people zealous for political and religious independence, pushed on a rapid career of victory against the opposing Turkish power, which sought to bring into submission its rebel subjects, and to support the orthodox faith by all the zeal which the powerful influence of the Ulemah could inspire into the councils of the Divan. Nothing, however, could withstand the overwhelming attack, and

the holy city itself submitted to be purged of its abominations by the Reforming Chief, who boldly challenged the Sultan himself to surrender his title of Commander of the Faithful, as devolving on him, to whom God had given the victory.

Arabia almost universally adopted the heresy with the same zeal with which it had, 1100 years before, supported the then Reform of Mahomet. In Syria and Anatolia, Damascus, Aleppo and Smyrna, many were known to be secretly proselytes. The Pacha of Bagdad trembled at the approach of the torrent: and that the new sect did not overrun at any rate the Eastern world with the rapidity of their ancestors in the first ages of Islamism, is ascribable only to the general growth of civilization, and the inventions which, by rendering war more scientific, have given wealth and discipline such great advantages. Though enthusiastic and daring as the followers of Abu-Beker and Omar, they have not now to contend against the degenerate vassals of Heraclius and Yezdegerd, but the disciplined resources of the Turkish and Persian empires. An adventurer* who spent several years in intimate connexion with them, after describing their admirable regulations of internal policy, and their fervent zeal in the cause of the Reformed religion, says, "To conclude, among the Wahhabites we see all that courage, activity and perseverance which make a rising nation; all that boldness of design and energy of execution which distinguish a new and vigorous government; in a word, all the advantages of despotism, and few of its inconveniences."

In the alarm which this impending revolution produced throughout the Turkish empire, it is said that some of the Ulemah had the simplicity to propose to reclaim the heretics by argument. Unfortunately, I can find no record of the proceedings of this council for the settlement of the faith. Such scenes, though under different actors, had been familiar to Constantinople in former days, and it is difficult to say that many of the subjects which had occupied the grave attention of some of its Christian councils, were of

* Vincenzo Maurizi, who passed under the name of Schaik Mansur, and was in the employ of Seyd Said, Sultan of Muscat.

more importance, at least with reference to the immediate interests of the followers of the respective systems, than those which in the 18th century came under discussion. The result was, however, the same as of old—leaving each party of the same opinion, with the infusion of a larger portion of intolerance and fanaticism, the effect of personal collision. The Mufti would rest on the solid ground of church authority and the tradition of the saints, and was not likely to yield to the claims of the Reformer to be allowed to judge for himself, and to examine the principles and practice of the Establishment, nay, even the supposed inspired books of the Prophet, by the tests which reason and the character of the Divine perfections furnished, as, in his opinion, the infallible guides for the detection of error and imposture.

An appeal to success, as the seal of the ministry of either side, would be equally unsatisfactory; for the wide diffusion of the religion of the Prophet under his followers, would be counterbalanced by the astonishing progress of the tenets and arms of the Wahhabites, under difficulties and dangers unprecedented in the religious revolutions of the East. In whatever way these conferences were carried on, it is clear that in the end both sides had again recourse to the only effectual way of settling their differences, and the Turkish power, by great efforts, checked the progress of the Wahhabites, with whom a peace was now concluded. With its usual base and timid policy, the hand of an assassin was instigated against the life of Abd-el-kaziz, who fell in 1803. His successor, Saoud, speedily recovered the advantages which his father had lost, and was at the head of the Wahhabite party, and in possession of Mecca, at the time Ali Bey was there on his pilgrimage.

As these scenes may appear far removed from our sphere of political relations, it may not be amiss to observe, that Saoud has had the honour of ranking among those whom his fame has induced to court his alliance, our own country, or at the least the East India Company; and this under circumstances not very creditable to us, though perhaps in keeping with some other instances of the fortune which has attended political connexions of weaker states with us. I give the story in sub-

stance as told with great apparent simplicity and truth by Vincenzo Maurizi.

An English armament, under the command, it is said, of a Col. Smith, appeared in 1810, on the coasts of the Persian Gulph, to avenge some aggression which had been committed by the Giovassem, who are described as pirates, but in alliance with, and protected by, Saoud, the Wahhabite Chief. On the appearance of the English force, Seyd Said, who had held his dignity as Sultan of Muscat as a very unwilling tributary to Saoud, immediately sent away his envoy who resided at the Court, and eagerly espoused the cause of those who appeared able to support his independence. The combined forces commenced active, and for some time successful, operations against Mallak, the Wahhabite General. The latter was, however, soon reinforced, and Col. Smith, finding the campaign likely to be long and serious, embarked his men, without, as it appears, making any provision for his allies, who were immediately attacked, and, behaving in a most cowardly manner, were destroyed in great numbers in sight of the English fleet. A treaty was immediately concluded between Mallak and the English commander, who is described as being disgusted with the cowardice of his allies, without any provision for their indemnity, the English merely engaging to be *neutral* in the war between the Wahhabites and the Sultan, a war, as it appears, undertaken solely in the confidence of their protection. This line of conduct, it is added, they did not think treacherous or impolitic, as no express convention had been concluded between them and Seyd Said; "while the late catastrophe had sufficiently proved that little advantage could be derived from his assistance."

"The degree of good faith and morality developed in this proceeding," Maurizi adds, "he leaves to the consideration of his readers; but as a stroke of policy, it was worthy of praise, as it secured permission to the English flag to float unmolested over the Persian Gulph, and extended the renown of the East India Company through countries where it had been before unknown."

The consequence was, that the fullest vengeance of Eastern despotism was immediately taken upon the unfortunate Sultan for his rebellion, and

Mallak ravaged his dominions with fire and sword.*

On the death of Saoud, he was succeeded by Abdelaziz the Second, of whose reign I have not been able to obtain any account, except that it was occupied in a series of wars of various fortune, with the Pachas of Egypt and Bagdad, in which they sometimes penetrated nearly to Derejah, the capital of the Reformers, but were always obliged to retreat from the harassing nature of the warfare, and the natural obstructions which the country afforded to an invading army. In 1818, we find the unfortunate Abdallah Ben Sund on the throne, who, it appears, had, in a more successful attack of Ibrahim Pacha, which ended in the capture of Derejah, been defeated and taken prisoner, and was sent as a trophy to Constantinople, together with his Imam, (probably the successor to the spiritual authority of Abdool-Wahhab,) there to await the full measure of the revenge which religious and political hatred would have in store for those who had so long braved the anathemas of the Church. A thousand heads of his heretical followers accompanied them as an offering to the Commander of the Faithful, who, after leading the wretched prisoners in chains through the streets, and torturing them in the recesses of their dungeons, caused them to be beheaded in his own presence, and delivered their bodies to the insult of a populace eager to glut its bigoted vengeance on the carcasses of wretches who had dared to question the authority of the Lord's vicegerent, and to brand with merited opprobrium the corruptions and depravity of the Established Church of their country.†

* As the East India Company has now an expedition engaged in the same object on the Persian Gulph as the one above alluded to, we shall perhaps hear something more of their old allies the Wahhabites. They are, however, probably now the weakest party, and to desert them may therefore be "a stroke of policy worthy of praise."

† What has been the fate of the remaining Wahhabite power does not appear. The Pacha, I understand, has retreated; his victory being probably the result of a coup de main, attended, in such a country, with little permanent effect. Notices of the Wahhabites, (for there is little that deserves more than that

Such was the tragical fate of the Wahhabite leader, and such have ever, in a greater or less degree, been the lamentable consequence of adding fuel to the flame of religious bigotry, by entrusting to it the power of the sword, which it is ever ready to court by reciprocal prostitution. "Give me, oh Caesar," cried the Mufti's predecessor, Nestorius, the Patriarch of Constantinople, before Theodosius, "give me the earth purged of heretics, and I will give you, in exchange, the kingdom of heaven! Exterminate with me the heretics, and with you I will exterminate the Persians!" If ever experience has established the relation of cause and effect, surely this alliance of religious and civil authority has produced degradation to the one and corruption to the other, by adding to the already too numerous temptations to rulers to govern badly, and sacrifice the interests of their people to their own prejudices and passions, the plausible pretext of supporting particular opinions from a sense of religious obligation, and a zeal for the welfare of society,—to provide for which, each speculator, Mahometan or Christian, must have the liberty of thinking his own system best calculated. What is this but to scatter, amidst even the best and wisest institutions of society, the seeds of prejudice, bigotry and disunion? And does not all history shew that in the result of such a system to the cause of religion, her interests are every where merged in the political and secular views of aggrandizement, to which she has been more or less associated? What chance can truth have of fair investigation where a band of hirelings is embodied, whose interest it instantly becomes to defend their privileges and the systems in which they originate? Does the head

name,) which the inquirer may compare and arrange into the most accordant system he can, will be found in Waring's Tour to Shiraz; the Travels of Ali Bey; Edin. Review, VIII. 40; Monthly Review, LXI. 518; Mills's History of Mahomedanism; the Romance called Anastasius; Malcolm's History of Persia, Vincenzo Maurizi's insignificant publication, and Niebuhr's Description de l'Arabie. The French History of the Wahhabites, (published, I understand, in 1810,) I should like to have been able to refer to.

of the Moslem faith pay much regard (when they interfere with her despotic projects) to the principles of the Koran, whose doctrines he at other times propagates by fire and sword? Did the Roman Church fill Europe with civil wars, anarchy and persecution, to promote the interests of religion or the policy of the successors of St. Peter? Does the orthodox clerk of the present day bawl loudest in support of true religion, or our venerable constitution "*in Church and State*"?

What encouragement is there, then, to court for religion the fostering care of civil authority? United to the temporal power in arbitrary governments, especially in the East, we have seen that she only gives a keener edge to the weapons of tyranny and pitiless despotism;—united to the milder institutions of Europe, experience still shews her invariably, without a single exception, prostituted to the interests of faction and corruption.

The fond speculator may, indeed, in the abstractions of a benevolent mind, picture to himself some fair Utopia, under rulers who might be content to take for their sole object the interest of the governed; over whom prejudice and interest might have no sway; who might have wisdom, or rather good fortune, enough to select a system, of which all should admit the excellency and divine authority; who might have virtue enough to refrain from prostituting their authority to an arbitrary dominion over the rights of conscience. But let history be heard as to the probability of such a concurrence of circumstances on either side; let morals tell how far it is likely men should continue in the paths of moderation and virtue while surrounded by increased temptations to deviate from them.

Even to those, then, who are not persuaded that religion in all cases disdains this alliance, as the espousal of interests which are permanent and eternal, to institutions variable from a thousand fleeting circumstances, we may submit that her voice, as well as that of worldly policy, prompts us, at any rate, to preserve her independent, till the seductive attractions of authority are somewhat diminished, and till we see ground for believing that the majority of the governments of the world are, in practice, (when entrusted with power which they can in any way abuse,) something better than expe-

dients for gratifying the ambition, cruelty and bigotry of some or the still more despicable avarice of others.*

E. T.

GLEANINGS; OR, SELECTIONS AND REFLECTIONS MADE IN A COURSE OF GENERAL READING.

No. CCCLXVII.

Table of the Cost of National Glory.

TAXES upon every article which enters into the mouth, or covers the back, or is placed under the foot—taxes upon every thing which it is pleasant to see, hear, feel, smell or taste—taxes upon warmth, light and locomotion—taxes on every thing on earth, and the waters under the earth—on every thing that comes from abroad or is grown at home—taxes on the raw material—taxes on every fresh value that is added to it by the industry of man—taxes on the sauce which pampers man's appetite, and the drug that restores him to health—on the ermine which decorates the judge, and the rope which hangs the criminal—on the poor man's salt, and the rich man's spice—on the brass nails of the coffin, and the ribands of the bride—at bed or board, couchant or levant, we must pay. The school-boy whips his taxed top—the beardless youth manages his taxed horse, with a taxed bridle, on a taxed road: and the dying Englishman pouring his medicine, which has paid 7 per cent, into a spoon that has paid 15 per cent—flings himself back upon his chintz-bed which has paid 22 per cent—makes his will on an eight pound stamp, and expires in the arms of an apothecary who has paid a license of an hundred pounds for the privilege of putting him to death. His whole property is then immediately taxed from 2 to 10 per cent. Besides the probate, large fees are demanded for burying him in the chancel; his virtues are handed down to posterity on taxed marble; and he is then gathered to his fathers,—to be taxed no more.

Ed. Rev. XXXIII. 77, 78.

* The reader of the former portion of this paper, (p. 261,) will be so good as to pardon the accidental mistake in the translation of *Il Allah Allah*.

REVIEW.

"Still pleased to praise, yet not afraid to blame."—POPE,

ART. I.—*The Authenticity, and consequently the Genuineness, of the Baptismal Commission, in its present Shape: Questioned upon the Evidence of the Apostolic History, and of the Apostolic Writings. To which are added, Two or Three Remarks on the Propriety of any Liturgy being entirely Athanasian, or entirely Apostolical.* London. Sold by Russell and Skey. 1819. 12mo. pp. 33.

BEFORE we analyse the contents of this pamphlet, we shall take the liberty of submitting to our readers a few observations on the subject of which it principally treats.

What the anonymous writer before us styles "the Baptismal Commission," is recorded in Matt. xxviii. 18—20: and these verses shall be cited, first in the original, and next in what we judge to be an accurate English translation of them.—We copy the text of Griesbach:

— Προσελθὼν ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἐλάλησεν αὐτοῖς, λέγων· ἐδόθη μοι πᾶσα ἐξουσία ἐν οὐρανῷ καὶ ἐπὶ γῆς. Πορευθέντες μαθητεύσατε πάντα τὰ ἔθνη, βαπτίζοντες αὐτοὺς εἰς τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ πατρὸς, καὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ, καὶ τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος· διδάσκοντες αὐτοὺς τηρεῖν πάντα, ὅσα ἐνετείλαμην ὑμῖν· καὶ ἰδοὺ, ἐγὼ μεθ' ὑμῶν εἰμι πάσας τὰς ἡμέρας, ἕως τῆς συντελείας τοῦ αἰῶνος.

"Jesus came near, and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and on earth. Go ye, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, to the end of the age." Newcome, I. V.

There is no want of external testimony in favour of this passage: nor can we appeal against it to any manuscripts or versions. *Biblical* criticism instantly decides for "the authenticity and genuineness of the baptismal commission." We cannot be permitted to expunge a text merely because it opposes our preconceived views, or presents difficulties, it may be great

difficulties, to our understandings. *Luther*, in his German translation of the Bible, has omitted the Epistle of *James*: but the omission reflects no honour on the memory of the illustrious Reformer.

We proceed, then, to inquire, What *Scriptural* criticism declares concerning the words in question, or whether they admit of a sound and a consistent interpretation?

The majority of Trinitarians maintain that the nineteenth verse implies the truth of their characteristic doctrine: * the correctness of their allegation and reasoning, will soon pass under our review.

In the opinion of Dr. Watts, no "great weight" is to be laid on what he terms "our Saviour's form and order of baptism" in this passage, because no "actual example or instance of such a form occurs in any place of Scripture," and, according to the epistles, "baptism was performed in the name of the Lord Jesus."†

Archdeacon Blackburne proposed to read the above verse thus: Πορευθέντες μαθητεύσατε πάντα τὰ ἔθνη (βαπτίζοντες αὐτοὺς) εἰς τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ πατρὸς καὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ, καὶ τοῦ πνεύματος ἁγίου. "Here," says he, "is not a single tittle altered in the text of the evangelist save in the pointing, and yet a very material alteration of the sense of the passage obtained, which makes the two evangelists [Matthew and Luke] consistent with each other."‡ It is a truly ingenious method of punctuation. But we are doubtful whether εἰς can immediately follow μαθητεύω, although Matt. xiii. 52 furnishes an example of the construction—μαθητευθεὶς εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν, κ. τ. λ.

The late Rev. Robert Tyrwhitt §

* See the language of Bishop Beveridge in Lindsey's *Apology*, p. 16, note, and Bengel. Guomou N. T. in loc.

† In Lindsey's *Second Address to the Students*, &c. pp. 19, 20.

‡ Works, I. lxxxvi. &c., Appendix to Life, and Mon. Repos. V. 129.

§ *Sermon on Baptismal Faith*, pp. 11, 12.

observes, that "the faith required of those whom the apostles were empowered to receive into the number of Christ's disciples, by baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, was wholly relative to the dominion of Christ, it being only an acknowledgment of it, with the ground on which it was admitted. It was a faith in the Son of God, on the evidence or testimony of the spirit of God: it was a confession that God had anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power."

"That baptism," remarks Mr. Belsham,* "into the name of any person signifies nothing more than the acknowledgment of his authority, and expresses no belief in his proper deity, is evident from what the apostle says of the Israelites, 1 Cor. x. 2, that they were 'baptized into Moses.' And when the same apostle expresses his apprehensions, 1 Cor. i. 15, 'lest any should say that he had baptized into his own name,' he could not suspect that they would represent him as claiming divine honours, but merely as assuming to be the head and leader of the Christian sect.

"Nor does the uniting the name of the Son with that of the Father and the Holy Spirit in the administration of baptism, prove the deity of Christ, or that he is any thing more than an exalted human being: much less does it prove that he is the proper object of religious worship. For, waving the consideration whether the text be genuine, whether it was intended as a formulary of the rite, whether the names of the Father and Spirit were ever used in primitive baptism, whether the precedents in the New Testament are not all into the name of Christ only; and finally, whether a positive institution which contains no direct address to an invisible being, can with any propriety be regarded as an act of religious worship, it is certain that no inference of equality in rank or homage can be drawn from the association of different names in the same sentence. See 1 Chron. xxix. 20, 'All the congregation bowed down their heads, and worshiped the Lord

and the king;" 1 Sam. xii. 18, 'The people feared the Lord and the king;' 1 Tim. v. 21, 'I charge thee before God and Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things.'"

If Mr. Belsham suspect the genuineness of "the baptismal commission," we heartily wish that he had laid before the public the reasons for his doubts. When he suggests the inquiry, whether the text "was intended as a formulary of the rite," he urges an extremely pertinent and weighty consideration. There is no proof whatever that any specific form of baptism was prescribed by our Lord to his apostles, no proof that the words before us are this form. The passage is descriptive of the Christian instruction by which baptism was both preceded and accompanied: the text represents, concisely yet significantly, the characteristic features of the gospel. Whoever believed in Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah, believed also in God as the Father of men and Christians, and in our Saviour's resurrection, and those other miraculous attestations to his doctrine which the New Testament declares to be the effect of the Holy Spirit or power.* This was the faith of all his disciples, whether they had previously been Jews or Heathens.

That the baptism administered to the first Christian converts implied their knowledge of the existence of the Holy Spirit, we learn from a memorable passage in the Acts of the Apostles:† "While Apollos was at Corinth, Paul came to Ephesus, and finding certain disciples, he said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Spirit since ye believed? And they said unto him, *We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Spirit.* And he said unto them, *Unto what then were ye baptized?* And they said, *unto John's baptism.* Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, That they should believe on him who should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. When they heard this, they were baptized

* *Calm Inquiry*, &c., (ed. 1st,) pp. 363, 364.

* Rom. i. 4; Gal. iii. 2.

† Acts xix. 1—2.

‡ Matt. iii. 1—13.

into the name of the Lord Jesus.* And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Spirit came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied." In like manner, it appears from the same history that Apollos himself, in the earliest stage of his public religious life, *knew only the baptism of John*, and needed and received a more exact acquaintance with the nature of Christianity.†

It is, therefore, evident that the baptism enjoined by Christ was baptism into a religion of which the Father was the author, the Son the instrument, and the Holy Spirit the witness: equally clear is it that such baptism supposed the partakers of it to be instructed in the truth which this proposition conveys; while we further perceive that the notion of any particular form of words having been prescribed on this occasion, by our Lord, is entirely gratuitous.

To all these considerations the present Impugner of "the authenticity and genuineness of the baptismal commission" has been inattentive: he assumes, but does not shew, that the words in question were delivered as a formula—*he assumes, without, however, attempting to prove, that εἰς signifies into and not in;‡ and he passes in total silence those parts of the early history of the gospel which illustrate its specific character, and teach us the design and object of Christian baptism.*

For the purpose of ascertaining "what Matthew related," or "what Christ enjoined," says this writer, "we have only to inquire what the apostles did. Our future controversy rests on this simple and single issue. And it is an issue which their history can alone determine." But the incorrectness of this statement arises from our author's misapprehension of the main circumstance to which it refers. Where, we again ask, is the evidence of Matt. xxviii. 19, having been intended as a *form*, or even of *any form whatever* having been enjoined?

Our Inquirer into "the authenticity and genuineness of the baptismal commission, in its present shape," imagines

that Mark not improbably refers to the previous dictation of *some form of baptism*, when he thus concludes our Saviour's discourse: '*In my name shall they cast out dæmons, &c.*' Here again," he adds, "we have, *totidem verbis*, the very phrase recorded in the Acts." For his own sake, and for that of his readers, it would have given us pleasure had he bestowed greater care on a comparison of the passages where this "very phrase" is thought by him to occur. Premising that in Mark xvi. 17, we find ΕΝ τῷ ΟΝΟΜΑΤΙ ΜΟΥ ΔΑΙΜΟΝΙΑ ΕΚΒΑΛΟΥΣΙ' Κ. Τ. Λ., with which expression we also meet in Acts iii. 6, xvi. 18, we must remark, that in Luke xxiv. 47, Acts. ii. 38, xix. 5, &c. the language is ΕΠΙ τῷ ΟΝΟΜΑΤΙ, ΕΙΣ τὸ ΟΝΟΜΑ: * nor was it "in his conversation with the two disciples on their way to Emmaus," that our Saviour directed that "repentance and remission of sins should be *preached in his name*," but in his subsequent interview with the whole body of his attendants. Hence from a *fancied identity of phrase* no conclusion can be deduced against the text in Matthew.

The author of this pamphlet too hastily conceives that the passage of which he arraigns "the authenticity and genuineness," asserts or implies the truth of the doctrine of the Trinity. Were that doctrine founded on solid and independent evidence, some confirmation of it we might, perhaps, have looked for in the words, "the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." It has appeared, however, that, according to the principles of fair interpretation, the tenet of "three persons and one God" obtains not the faintest countenance from the baptismal commission. The only question to be determined is, what impression would be made by our Saviour's language on those who heard it from his lips, on those who first read it in Matthew's Gospel? "The Romish missal" and "The Book of Common Prayer" ought not to be regarded as sound expositions of the Scriptures; and still less are texts to be pronounced spurious only because they are falsely understood.

* That is, *into the religion of the Lord Jesus.*

† Acts. xviii. 24—27; and in Wakefield's Tract.

‡ We mean, in this class of texts.

* The force of all these prepositions is pointed out by H. Haynes. S. Inq. (2d. ed.) pp. 295—301.

Marks of precipitancy appear in several of the pages of this little tract. The subject is confessedly important : but the writer does not discuss it with the judicious reflection and critical accuracy, which the nature of his inquiry demands, and which are indispensable to its success. That he is a sincere and zealous friend of Christian truth, we see no reason for doubting : and on this account we the more deeply regret that he has not done greater justice to his wishes and his character. He often seems to have made his extracts merely from the *English Testament*, and to consider the erroneous associations existing in the minds of many *English* readers as correct views of the meaning of our Lord and his apostles.

The "remarks on the propriety of any liturgy being entirely Athanasian or entirely Apostolical," or, in other words, of our worship being consistent with itself, form the best part of the pamphlet. There is something, however, in the author's style and manner, which little suits our taste ; an air of levity and occasionally a tone of irony, which are uncongenial with his theme. When he says, (p. 28,) "It is not, I repeat, with the creed of Athanasius that one quarrels ; it may be, for ought I contend now, an improvement upon that of Christ," this broad sneer will repel the serious Trinitarian, and cannot be applauded by any *reasoner* among Unitarian Christians.

ART. II.—*Letters to a Protestant Divine, in Defence of Unitarianism.*
By another Barrister. 8vo. pp. 120.
Hunter. 1818.

THIS is a new and valuable contribution, from the pen of a layman, to the Unitarian treasury. The author was formerly a Trinitarian, and having embraced Unitarianism, was led into an amicable correspondence with a friend, "a Protestant Divine," of which the present "*Letters*," make part. They refer to some of the principal texts adduced on either side in the Unitarian controversy, which, as well as the general subjects which they involve, the Barrister has treated with judgment and ability. A mild Christian spirit pervades all his pages.

In reply to a remark of his Correspondent's that the Greek fathers, who

understood their language better than we do, interpreted John x. 30, "I and my Father are one," of the equality of the Son with the Father, the author says, that a very long period elapsed before this construction was attempted to be put upon them, and that even contemporaries, which none of these fathers were, do not always correctly interpret works written in their vernacular tongue : he then proceeds,

"We lawyers can furnish hundreds of instances of this kind in the construction of modern acts of parliament, which are usually drawn by professional characters, men of learning and experience, well acquainted with their own language, and whose object it is to render the acts they draw as clear, and their meaning as certain, as possible : yet when it is necessary to reduce them into practice, and to decide upon their construction, we have often not only one counsel and one judge against another, but even different courts differing in opinion from each other upon the construction of the same sentence. You would be astonished to hear how many hundreds of judicial determinations there have been—how many conflicting, and clashing opinions and authorities, to determine the meaning of three acts of Parliament, passed in the reigns of Queen Elizabeth and King James the First, relative to bankrupts, and to the relief of the poor ; some of them in the very reigns in which these acts were passed, and others in our own times, though we do not live at a more remote period since their enactment, than the fathers you allude to did after the publication of the Gospel of St. John. Is it any wonder then, that the meaning of one of the fishermen of Galilee, writing in a language which was not his mother-tongue, should have been sometimes doubted, and sometimes misunderstood, by writers following him at the distance of two or three centuries? That learned and ingenious persons, many of them recently converted from Paganism, and eager to introduce their preconceived notions and opinions into Christianity,—the simplicity of which they had begun to corrupt in the very days of the apostles, as the latter themselves lament,—should by degrees, in the course of two or three centuries, have succeeded in the opinions of a considerable part of their readers, many of them similarly circumstanced with themselves, in putting constructions upon several passages in the Sacred Writings, which the apostolic writers themselves never intended? Is it not rather matter of surprise that these writers should have expressed themselves with so much sim-

plicity and clearness, frequently upon subjects in themselves abstruse and difficult, that by comparing one part of their writings with another, and applying to them the same rules of fair and just criticism, which we do to other ancient writings, we should be able to ascertain their meaning so well, as in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred we find we do,—and in so many instances to detect and repudiate the false glosses and erroneous opinions, which these fathers had fastened upon them?

In the profession of the law we have a rule, which appears to me to be a very sensible and judicious one, namely, To interpret, whenever it is in our power, one part of an act of parliament by another; and when we can ascertain, by the context or otherwise, the sense in which any given words are made use of by the legislature in one part of an act, to conclude, unless the contrary appears, that they intended to make use of them in the same sense in other parts of it; or, if the words do not occur in any other parts of the same act, we endeavour to discover in what sense they are used in other acts made *in pari materia*. Pursuing this course, which is not only sanctioned by legal experience, but by the principles of sound criticism, it appeared to me, that we could not do better than to interpret the Scriptures by the Scriptures, and particularly each Scripture writer and teacher by himself, where it was in our power; as this would enable us to arrive at their meaning with quite as much certainty, as any of the fathers, who happened to live two or three hundred years after their publication."—Pp. 9—11.

After many luminous observations upon this place of Scripture, the Barrister says,

"It is a most singular fact, that there is scarcely any part of this celebrated passage, so often quoted by Trinitarians in support of their doctrine, which will not be found, when attentively considered, to be in direct opposition to it. I shall give one more instance of it from the conclusion. Our Lord says that he was sanctified and sent into the world by the Father. His sanctification and mission, we perceive, are mentioned together; as if both took place at the same time, or the former immediately, or shortly, preceded the latter, and took place with a view to it, in order to qualify him for it. But what occasion could there be for him to be sanctified, who, according to the Trinitarian hypothesis, was from all eternity most holy, wise, just and good? If he was sanctified at, or just before, his

mission, or at any other time whatever, it follows, that during the whole of an antecedent eternity he must have been unsanctified. If it should be said by the Trinitarian, contrary to our Lord's words, (who never speaks of himself by parts and parcels, but as one entire being,) that it was only his human nature that was then sanctified,—this, though it agrees perfectly with the Unitarian system, that at a certain period of his life he was by the Father sanctified and sent into the world—that is, sent among the people to preach the gospel to them,—will not correspond at all with the Trinitarian doctrine, which represents the divine Logos, the second person in the Trinity only, as having been sent from heaven into this world to unite with the human nature, which previously to the supposed miraculous conception had no existence. Supposing it, however, to have been the divine Logos, that was sanctified and sent into the world by the Father, there are other unavoidable inferences which are utterly irreconcilable with the Trinitarian scheme. He that sanctifies must, whilst language has any meaning, be considered as greater or holier than he who is sanctified by him, as our Saviour himself says, 'Which is greater, the gift, or the altar which sanctifies the gift?' Matt. xxiii. 19. In like manner, he who sends his messenger to finish certain work which he had given him to do, (John xvii. 5,) will always be deemed to be superior to the messenger he has dispatched to perform it. How is it also upon the Trinitarian hypothesis, that the Holy Ghost had no concern with our Lord's sanctification; and that he is never represented as having been sent by the Holy Ghost, but by the Father only?"—Pp. 27—29.

On the Incarnation, or union of the Divine Logos, the supposed second person of the Trinity, with the human nature of our Lord, so as to constitute together with it one person, having two distinct natures, he says,

"Is it not most extraordinary, if the divine Logos was inseparably united to the human nature of our Lord, so as to constitute with it but one person, that it does not appear to have enabled him to perform one miracle, to impart one divine revelation, or to bear one suffering? That it did not enable him to perform any miracles is undeniable, not only from the absence of all proof or assertion to this effect, but also from his own express declarations so often alluded to: 'I can of mine own self do nothing. The Father who dwelleth in me, he doth the works.' That it did not enable him

to make any divine revelations, appears likewise from his own declarations: 'My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me.' John vii. 16. And he elsewhere declares that it was his *Father* who sent him. John v. 37. So he afterwards says upon the same subject; 'As my *Father* hath taught me, I speak these things.' John viii. 28. Here it appears by strong implication, not only that what he spoke was from his Father, but that he did not previously know it himself, and required to be taught it by, and to learn it from, another. Again he says, 'For I have not spoken of myself, but the Father which sent me, he gave me a *commandment*, what I should say, and what I should speak. Whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak.' John xii. 49, 50. That it did not enable him to bear any sufferings, is to be collected, not only from there being no proof or assertion that it did, but from the account given us of his suffering in the garden, just before his crucifixion, when the evangelist informs us, Luke xx. 43, that 'there appeared an angel unto him from heaven *strengthening* him;' which would have been both absurd and useless, if the divine Logos had enabled him to bear his sufferings. What a lamentable exhibition is made by this text, upon the Trinitarian hypothesis of the incarnation, of a created being strengthening his Creator,—of a poor finite angel of limited powers, a being not even pure in the sight of his God, nor free from the charge of folly before him, strengthening Omnipotence and Omniscience! Some Trinitarians, perhaps, would contend, that it was only the human nature of our Lord that was strengthened by the angel. But in the first place, the evangelist does not say so, but speaks of our Lord generally and entirely; and, so far from confining what he says to a part of him, that is, to one particular nature, does not appear from any part of his writings to have had the least idea of our Lord's having two natures. What right have we then to add to his words mere suppositions, made expressly to favour an hypothesis of our own? Secondly, all that constituted our Lord, even according to the Trinitarian doctrine, made but one person; therefore when the evangelist speaks of him, he must be understood to speak of that person, and not of any particular part of him, unless he tells us so, which he has not done. Thirdly, as according to the Trinitarians, the Divine Nature was inseparably united to the human nature, what occasion could there be to send an angel from heaven to strengthen the human nature, when it had already almighty power always united

to, and present with it, which must have rendered the assistance of a finite, limited and created being quite superfluous? If there had been any proof of such an incarnation as is contended for, it would not have been pretended, that we are any where informed that the Divine Nature refrained from aiding the human nature upon this trying occasion to bear its sufferings, the Sacred Writings being quite silent upon the subject of two natures in Christ, and the Trinitarians on the contrary maintaining, that its assistance was absolutely necessary to enable the human nature to bear the infinite punishment, which, according to them, the justice of the Supreme Being must otherwise have inflicted upon the elect, who are redeemed and saved by the death and sufferings of our Lord. The power of the Divine Nature then, that is, *almighty* power, must, according to their hypothesis, have been exerted. The assistance of an angel, therefore, if it were considered merely as superadded to that of *almighty* power, would not have been equal to the dust of the balance; but when considered as *strengthening* Omnipotence, the absurdity is monstrous. Who can wonder, that the great Newton should pronounce of such a doctrine, that the time would come, when it would be exploded, as an absurdity equal to transubstantiation? That time is now, thank God! fast approaching. The night is far spent, the day is at hand, indeed hath already begun to dawn upon us, and will shine more and more, till it arrives at its meridian brightness. How few were there in Sir Isaac Newton's time, who thought as he did! How many thousands are there at present in this country only! How few were the Unitarian places of worship within our own remembrance!—four or five, perhaps, in the whole kingdom. At present there are few places of any magnitude without one; and if we may form a judgment from what we know ourselves, and hear from others, there may be some foundation for the report, that there are more Unitarians within the Church, than out of it.

"The Unitarian system stands uncumbered with any of the difficulties we have just been contemplating: considering our blessed Lord, though the greatest and most distinguished of God's messengers and prophets, to be a man of like passions with ourselves, endued with exquisite sensibility of feeling, and perfect knowledge of the extent of his approaching sufferings, and, therefore, for a moment overwhelmed with distress, at the prospect of what he was so soon to undergo,—it acknowledges the kind and

gracious interposition of *his* Father and *our* Father, of *his* God and *our* God, in sending an angel, as he had occasionally done before in the case of others of the prophets and holy men of old, to comfort and strengthen him."—Pp. 56—60.

The following remarks upon the Trinitarian inquiry how a man can judge the world, appear to us very just:

"It is a common thing for writers of this description to allege, that a mere man cannot do this, and a mere man cannot do that; but they well know that this is not the true question,—but what God, who is omnipotent and omniscient, can empower and enable one of the human race to perform. A mere man, we well know, cannot raise the dead; and yet both Elijah and Elisha, when commissioned and enabled by the Most High, did this under the old dispensation; and both Peter and Paul, under the new. A mere man cannot know the heart or the thoughts of any other man, and yet one of the highly-favoured prophets whom I have just mentioned, was empowered to know the heart and the thoughts of his servant Gehazi, when at a distance from him; and also to know whatever the king of Syria did, even in his bed-chamber. The same great Being who thus enabled him to know the thoughts of one or two persons, could unquestionably have enabled him to know the thoughts of as many others as he pleased; nay, if such was his sovereign will, of the whole human race. However some may be startled at this upon the first view, yet the denial of it would amount to nothing less than prescribing bounds to Omnipotence, and limiting the Holy One of Israel. It would be reviving the old cry of unbelief—'Can God furnish a table in the wilderness? Can he give bread also? Can he provide flesh for his people?' Psalm lxxviii. 19, 20. What we are here to consider is, whether the Almighty God can empower and enable the blessed Jesus, in a glorified state, with his mental powers enlarged and improved, beyond all that the utmost stretch of the human intellect in this present infant and imperfect state can form a conception of, to know the thoughts, and read the hearts and past actions of the whole human race, if this should be necessary to qualify him to pass sentence upon every one of them, either at the same time, or within a given space of longer or shorter duration, as shall appear to his infinite wisdom to be for the best. This power, vast and extraordinary as it may appear, would be still finite, and, in comparison with Omnipotence and Omniscience, not equal to a grain of sand, compared to

the entire globe of the earth."—Pp. 78, 79.

We can take only another extract: it is on the consistency of the titles of Christ with the Unitarian scheme:

"You remark, that 'you have arrived at the end of your paper without urging those evidences of the Deity of Christ which arise from the ascription to him of every name, title, attribute, work and honour, of Deity.' Now really, my dear Sir, I must say, that I cannot find any where, that all these things have been ascribed to him, greatly as he has been honoured and exalted by his Father and our Father, by his God and our God. Where is he ever declared to have originally, and inherently, life or power in himself? Is he any where represented as having either, except by communication from, and as the gift of, his Father? Can he be said to have all the attributes of Deity ascribed to him, when one of the most essential of them, namely omniscience, is denied to him, upon no less authority than his own, by his expressly declaring that he did not know the day of judgment, and that no one knew it, but his Father only? When his possession of another equally essential attribute of Deity, that is to say, omnipotence, is likewise negatived upon the same authority: 'I can of mine own self do nothing?' John v. 30. Is any thing like this ever said of the Father? And again, Luke xx. 23: 'To sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not *mine* to give; but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared by my *Father*;' not by the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, nor by the Trinity, a term not to be found at all in the Scriptures, nor by God, which, it would have been pretended, included all the three persons who have been supposed to constitute the Godhead; but by the *Father*. Lastly, when it is fully and expressly stated, that his kingdom, and by consequence the authority and power connected with it, are not to be eternal; it being declared in the clearest and most explicit terms by the Apostle Paul, that this his kingdom, long as it is to last, and glorious as it is to be, is to have an end, when, the apostle informs us, he is to deliver it up; and does not say to God,—which the Trinitarians perhaps might have contended, as has just been remarked, meant their three supposed persons in the Godhead, though it would have been attended with the awkwardness of averring a delivery of this kingdom by himself to himself,—neither does he say, to the Trinity, nor to the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, nor to the Father and Holy Ghost, each of whom, supposing them to be persons in the Godhead

equal in power and glory, would have been equally entitled to receive it,—but to the Father only; all which things are totally inconsistent with any thing like equality, which, as it does not, nor can exist, cannot, in my humble opinion, as you suppose, be essential to all our dearest hopes, nor have the slightest influence upon them. To me it appears inconceivable, how any one, after duly considering and maturely weighing the plain and positive declarations I have just cited, standing as they do upon the highest and most indisputable authority, can help seeing, that it is the Father, and the Father only, who is the great author and sovereign disposer of all things, and

that it is he, and he only, who claims, and is entitled to, the attributes of true Deity."—Pp. 99—101.

The reader will now perceive that this is a work of no common merit, and that the Unitarians are under great obligations to this new and able defender of their cause.

Since the preceding account of this valuable pamphlet was drawn up, we have received a second edition of it, increased by the addition of another letter into an octavo volume, of which we shall take notice in our next Number.

POETRY.

ISHE CHERUVIMIJ,

OR,

THE SONG OF THE CHERUBIM:

*Chanted in the Russian Churches during
the procession of the Cup.*

See the glorious Cherubim

Thronging round *the Eternal's throne*;
Hark! they sing their holy hymn

To the unutterable One!
All-supporting Deity,
Living Spirit, praise to Thee!

Rest, ye worldly tumults, rest!
Here let all be peace and joy:—
Grief no more shall rend our breast;
Tears no more shall dim our eye.

Heaven-directed spirits, rise
To the temple of the skies;

Join the ranks of angels bright,
Near *the Eternal's* dazzling light.

Chvalim Boga, Chvalim Boga! *
A.

Vskuij mia iesi oostavil?

Why hast thou forsaken me?

THE MIDNIGHT HYMN:

Sung at Easter in the Greek Churches.

Why, Thou never-setting light!

Is thy brightness veiled from me?

Why does this unusual night

Cloud Thy blest benignity?

I am lost without Thy ray:

Guide my wandering footsteps, Lord!

Light my dark and erring way,

To the noontide of Thy word!

A.

* Hallelujah.

OBITUARY.

1820. April 18, aged 84, JOSEPH LIDDELL, Esq., of Moor Park, Cumberland. He was an early pupil of the Rev. Hugh Moises, in the public Grammar School of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, where, having made great proficiency in the Greek and Latin Classics, he became a student in Trinity College, Cambridge, where he was of the same year with the late Bishop Watson, with whom, till late in life, he kept up an intimacy: he was also the associate of Messrs. Thorp, Jebb and other distinguished ornaments of the University at that time. He was highly valued for his eminent classical learning, and also for acuteness in metaphysical and moral investigations; nor less for the integrity of his principles and the

liberality of his mind. He afterward entered at Gray's Inn, and became a Barrister; but coming in early life into the possession of an ample fortune, he did not practise as a professional lawyer, though for the accommodation of the neighbourhood he continued to the last to act as a Commissioner in cases of bankruptcy, on which occasions, however, he generally gave his fees to the bankrupt if deserving, or otherwise disposed for the relief of distress. In many other ways he turned his legal knowledge to the public benefit. As a country gentleman he was a warm supporter of the political independence of his native county, and a steady friend in general to civil and religious liberty. From his early

connexions, and from his subsequent intimacy with the venerable Bishop Law, his son the Bishop of Elphin, and Archdeacon Paley, as well as with several eminent Dissenting Ministers, (Dr. Henry, the historian, then minister at Carlisle, Messrs. Robinson and Miln his successors, Mr. Lowthion, of Newcastle, &c.,) it may be presumed that he was always disposed to apply his talents and learning to the study of the Holy Scriptures under the influence of an enlarged and liberal spirit; in the prosecution of which he was led to a full conviction of the Unity and Absolute Supremacy of the One God, the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ, and to an humble dependence for the hope of eternal life only on the mission, ministry, death and resurrection of Christ. In other words, he firmly believed in the appeal of Christ himself to his Father, that "this is life eternal, to know the one only living and true God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent;" while to others there might be gods many and lords many, to him there was but one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus. Being obliged, for many years, in consequence of commercial engagements in which he was involved by friendship for several near connexions, to reside a good deal at Newcastle, he was an attentive and regular hearer at the Chapel in Hanover Square there. But his was not so much a speculative as a practical religion: like his Master, it was his desire to go about doing good; and those who came before him as objects of kind assistance, he was always reluctant to reject. Few, perhaps none, probably not himself, knew to what extent he assisted his friends, and bore disappointments and heavy losses with more than common patience.—Of his charitable distributions he was never ostentatious: but when he thought that any good purpose might be served by it, he was not averse to his name appearing. When he sent his second benefaction of £50 each to the Unitarian Fund, and to the York College, he wrote to the friend whom he employed to transmit it, "You know how much I abhor ostentation; but on this occasion I do not bid you conceal my name. I am not ashamed to confess before men, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers."

His sun is now set, from a dignified but placid and calm retirement; illuminated in its descent by satisfactory reviews of a well-spent life, and carrying down with it the cheering light derived from the animating prospects of the gospel. He is come to his grave in a full age, like as a shock of corn cometh in

in its season: let us hope that it will be found to yield in a proportion which will shew that the seed had been sown on a good ground. V. F.

April 23, in his 80th year, the Rev. JOHN MARTIN, more than 40 years pastor of the Baptist Church, in Keppel Street, Bloomsbury, author of a *Life of Himself*, and many controversial Tracts and Sermons.

May 6, at *Portsea*, Rev. JOHN KINGSFORD, a minister of the New General Baptist denomination.

— 14, at Liverpool, HANNAH, relict of the Rev. Caleb ROTHERAM, of Kendal, Westmoreland, (see Mon. Repos. V. 221 and 474,) and youngest daughter of the late John Thomson, Esq., of the same place, aged 63.

— 14, at *Southampton*, Rev. RICHARD OWERS, pastor of the Baptist Church.

— 19, in the 19th year of her age, Miss ELIZABETH NEIGHBOUR, second daughter of Mr. Thomas Neighbour, Wine Merchant, Smithfield. This is the *third* victim which from the same family, in the course of the last four years, hath been by the writer committed to the silent tomb.

June 4, at his house in *Baker Street*, *Portman Square*, the Rt. Hon. HENRY GRATTAN, Member of Parliament for Dublin. His death was hastened by the effort which he made to come over to England in order to support the claims of his Roman Catholic countrymen in the House of Commons.

— 5, at the house of his son at *Hackney*, Mr. JAMES CURTIS, formerly of Mangotsfield, near Bristol, in the 79th year of his age.

— 27, at his father's house in *Lincoln's-inn-fields*, Henry Cline, jun., Esq., aged 39, one of the Surgeons and one of the Lecturers in Anatomy and Surgery to St. Thomas's Hospital; eminent for his professional skill, and highly esteemed by an enlightened acquaintance for the liberality of his opinions, for the activity, vigor and inventiveness of his understanding, for his simplicity, integrity and benevolence.

Lately at *Bromyard*, *Herefordshire*, aged 76, the Rev. JOEL BANFIELD, 26 years minister of the Independent congregation of that place.

INTELLIGENCE.

DOMESTIC.

RELIGIOUS.

The Protestant Society for the Protection of Religious Liberty.

THE Annual Meeting of this Society was held on Saturday, May 13th, at the London Coffee House, and although the meeting was not advertised, and the room was more capacious than the Hall at the Albion Tavern, where the former meetings were held, it was thronged to excess, and several hundred persons went away, unable to procure admission even to the passage to the room.

Punctually at the early but appointed hour of eleven o'clock, Lord HOLLAND, introduced by the Rev. Mark Wilks, the Treasurer, the Secretaries, and the Committee, appeared, and amidst loud acclamations he took the Chair.

He commenced the business by briefly advertng to the objects of the Society, and the cheerfulness with which he had attended to assist in their promotion: at the same time he stated, that he was not yet recovered from an attack of the gout, and was much exhausted by his exertions the preceding night in the House of Lords; so that he apprehended he might be unable to remain until the close of the meeting: but nothing except great exhaustion should induce his departure, as he should leave his heart if his person was withdrawn. (*Loud applause.*)

THOMAS PELLATT, Esq., one of the Secretaries, then began to read the proceedings of the Committee during the past year, but was induced to suspend the reading on the suggestion of some friends, that as the crowd was great, the meeting would be satisfied with the detail which the speech expected from Mr. Wilks might supply.

JOHN WILKS, Esq., the other Secretary, therefore rose amidst the long and cordial greetings of the whole assembly. He entreated their candour, from the disordered state of his spirits and his health, but proceeded to deliver an address that continued during more than three hours to captivate and astonish the audience; and which induced even the aged and the feeble, females and gentlemen, several hundreds of whom could procure no seats, to disregard all the pressures they endured. It would be a hopeless experiment to endeavour to report a speech that surpassed even the former efforts of that gentleman, which made the persons present laugh and cry,

express abhorrence, and shout with applause, as the speech attempted to amuse or interest, to encourage or to excite them; and which, never allowing a suspension to a varying but continual excitement, was heard not merely with attention but with enthusiasm, and at length terminated amidst general regret. The outline only we can attempt.

He first alluded to cases in which individuals and congregations improperly requested the interference of the Society. If a meeting-house was robbed of books—if legacies were withheld—if trustees were negligent or hostile—if differences arose between ministers and their congregations—if private Dissenters met with private injuries, for which they might have civil redress, applications were made to the Committee, who could not interpose either with propriety or according to the rules of the Institution, and the gratuitous labours of the Secretaries were much and needlessly increased.

For the Institution he did not wish to be an advocate; he would rather instruct than excite. He desired that information should be given which might enable ministers to advise their neighbours and their people, and that being instructed as to their rights and remedies, they might be able to act without requiring perpetual communications and advice. The nature and number of occurrences hostile to religious liberty during the past year would be not merely an apology for the Society, but a demonstration of its utility and importance.

Among the cases that had interested the Committee might be first mentioned those of *pecuniary demands*, either illegally made, or as to which some alterations of the law were required. Demands of tolls on Sundays from Protestant Dissenters going or returning from public worship, had frequently been mentioned, in some instances submitted to and deplored, and in others resisted with success. The exemption from such demands depended not on a general act, but on each local statute regulating every particular road. In each case that statute must be consulted, and if advice was needed, a copy of that clause must accompany the application for advice. The exemption was important to the property and honour of Dissenters. It had been coeval with the introduction of Turnpike Acts, and was extended to them equally with the members of the Established Church. Their honour, therefore, required its perpetuity, and as the payment

of tolls, doubled by most Acts on Sundays, withdrew many pounds from members of poor congregations, they were either compelled to abstain from worship or attend a church, or make pecuniary sacrifices they could not afford, or withdraw from their ministers contributions of which greatly they had need. The decision in the Wiltshire case was unfavourable, as in all cases where the words used were "going or returning to or from any parochial church, chapel, or other place of religious worship;" the exemption could not be claimed if the place of worship was without the parish in which the Dissenter dwelt. In cases at *Welford*, Northamptonshire; *Newport Pagnel*, Bucks; *Wareham*, Dorset; *Tenterden*, Kent; *Wrentham*, Suffolk; and *Brighton*, the Committee could, therefore, afford no relief; but at *Weymouth*, an opinion was obtained for the Rev. Dr. *Cracknell*, who had liberally contributed to the Society, that Dissenters were there exempt, (although a different opinion had been given by Mr. Sergeant *Lens*,) and their right had been allowed. The Committee now, however, watched, at considerable expense and trouble, all renewals of Turnpike Acts, and procured the re-insertion of words of exemption that would be effectual, and that would restore gradually that state of exemption which, by Episcopal influence, had been intentionally, secretly, injuriously and extensively infringed.

The next of the *pecuniary* matters affecting the Dissenters, arose from ASSESSED TAXES. Already they began to reap the harvest of past exertions. It ever afforded him pleasure to eulogize those excellent academical Institutions, in which intelligent, zealous, devout young men were prepared for the arduous duties of the Christian ministry. Those Institutions he loved, for he was a Dissenter. (*Cheers.*) No person could feel more attachment to the groves and halls sacred to the muses and to learning, for past pleasure and personal improvement, than he felt towards those abodes, whence proceeded men humble, but enlightened, unassuming, but well taught, who were to be the future guides and best instructors of Dissenters, and the world. (*Loud cheers.*) Never were they more needed, nor more useful. With those attachments and convictions, he reminded them with pleasure of the case of the academy at *Idle*, in Yorkshire, where the Commissioners seized the books from the library of the Institution for the Window Tax and House Tax of the apartments appropriated to students, and were compelled by the decision of the Judges to refund the levy, and to abstain from the re-assertion of their claim. (*Hear, hear.*)

Encouraged by that decision, the Committee had, with pleasure, instructed the Rev. Mr. *BULL*, the excellent and indefatigable tutor of an academy at *Newport Pagnell*, and the Rev. Mr. *FLETCHER*, of *Blackburn*, whose talents they knew and admired, to resist similar applications; and so instructed, they had resisted similar claims, and convinced the Commissioners that they could not enforce their demand. (*Applause.*)

Among other *pecuniary demands*, he had again to refer to the subject of POORS' RATES, charged on places of religious worship, belonging to Protestant Dissenters. The statement of the law on the subject, he would repeat, because he wished that they, and especially the Dissenting Ministers present, should be accurately informed. He believed it was now generally known, and universally regretted, that the trustees of Dissenting places of worship, or any occupiers beneficially interested in the receipt of pews-rents from them, were liable to the payment of poors' rates in respect of the balance remaining after a deduction of the *necessary expenses*. His dissatisfaction with the law did not chiefly arise from the pecuniary payments extorted, although at all times, and especially in the present times, they were afflicting deductions from the incomes of men, whose recompence on earth was most inadequate, as their labours were above all praise. But his displeasure was excited by the trouble, expense and uncertainty of redress. Now on an appeal to the Sessions, the question to be decided was the necessity of the expenses incurred. At those Sessions, Clergymen and High Churchmen officiated as Magistrates, for only Churchmen could be Justices. These men, unfriendly to Dissent—the systematic and local enemies of the appellants, were to appreciate and to fix a value upon the quantum of piety, and learning, and integrity, and zeal, and usefulness, possessed by Protestant Dissenting Ministers. (*Hear, hear.*) At York, the Justices had established a maximum of allowance, and affirmed, that, because some of the ministers of the Church of England accepted curacies, with salaries of £30, £40, or £50, therefore, that any further expenditure on account of ministers, among Protestant Dissenters, must be disallowed. Under such circumstances, the Committee had sometimes reluctantly advised their correspondents to abstain from appealing to the Sessions, and to endeavour, by preliminary measures, to prevent a painful and injurious defeat. (*Applause.*) To his friends, the Dissenting Ministers who were present at that meeting, he would say, when you receive an intimation of

the insertion of the chapel in the rate, *immediately* demand a copy of the rate, for if an appeal should not be made to the next Quarter Sessions, after the making of the rate, all future proceedings in respect of such rate, would be unavailing. For such copy of the rate, only 6d. could be charged for every three hundred words. (*Hear.*) When that copy was obtained, the first measure which should be adopted, would be to invite the assistance of some friend conversant with the parochial property. See, said Mr. Wilks, whether any property be omitted; look for the glebe; see if any pews which may be let in the Church be rated; (*hear, hear, and laughter;*) see whether the parsonage-house be rated; (*hear;*) see whether the property of the churchwardens and overseers be rated; see if any be inadequately assessed; and if any such omissions be discovered, an appeal might with propriety be commenced, and would be successfully prosecuted; and he generally found that those who had been the first to do the wrong, had been among the first to retire from the contest. (*Applause.*) It was a fortunate principle in our nature, that the very same money-getting, pitiful, contemptible spirit, which would stimulate to evil, repelled us from that evil which we meditated, when it would re-act upon ourselves. And he had never known a case, when that spirit of investigation had acted with vigour and promptitude, in which it had not been crowned with success. (*Applause.*)

It had, indeed, been said, that the burden was but light. Such was not the case, for to many congregations, in villages and small towns, tottering beneath a weight already scarce sustainable, another atom made them sink; the poor's rates had increased to an extent which was most alarming; "its appetite grew ravenous with what it fed upon." (*Applause.*)

During the past year, the Committee had received a letter from a gentleman at York, who was actively concerned for a Dissenting Chapel in that city, which he would take the liberty to read. He so read it, because it supplied to him a practical illustration of the force of principle, and of the influence of attachment to religious truth. (*Hear, hear.*) That letter stated, that the poor's rates amounted to between £2. 10s. and £3, per quarter, although the debt on the chapel amounted to £1500, and the receipts were far short of the expenditure. That gentleman was one of the trustees of the chapel, and with the just and honest indignation of a man of feeling, he had asked, "was that the beneficial interest, the profitable occupancy which

their wise opponents had said the trustees of chapels possessed in them?" (*Applause.*)

During the past year, applications had been received from Rev. Mr. MANNING, of Exeter, and from the Rev. Mr. ALEXANDER, of Norwich. At *Moberley*, near *Knutsford*, in Cheshire, where the salary of a minister from a small congregation, amounted to not more than £10 a-year, a vestry had been called, and it had been determined, that the little meeting-house should be rated. To the Committee the minister applied, but as Cheshire was a county distinguished for high-church politics, they advised the excellent man from a hazardous expenditure. To the advice he had assented, he admitted that Cheshire might be considered as the aristocracy of English aristocracy, and that, though it would make some diminution in his income, yet to that diminution he would submit. (*Cheers.*)

They had heard of the case of the Rev. ROWLAND HILL, and of the reiterated attempts which had been made to assess Surrey Chapel, and of his ultimate success. He, indeed, then wore the laurel of triumph—not the laurel stained with blood—but such a laurel as he, though a minister of the gospel of peace, could have no objection to wear upon his brow. (*Applause.*) The case of Mr. SLATTERIE, of Chatham, was also important. He had resisted to that hour every demand for payment which had been made, and in such resistance he was determined to persevere. There was also a case of Rev. Mr. GILES, a Baptist minister at Chatham, which had been submitted to the Committee. The circumstances of that case were peculiar. Mr. Giles received a regular salary from the congregation, and as he knew that intellect was not assessable, that professional emoluments and salaries were not rateable, he had advised resistance, and he understood the attempt had not been renewed. (*Applause.*)

From Lincoln an application had been received by a gentleman on behalf of a *Wesleyan Methodist Chapel* in that ancient city. The Committee hesitated to interfere, not from any disrespect to that body of Dissenters, but because amongst that denomination a society was established for the defence of their peculiar rights; but from that gentleman the advice requested had not been withheld.

Again would he repeat, that a firm and wise resistance would generally be attended with success. (*Applause.*) Nor could he better illustrate this truth than by a case at Malton. There it had been determined, that property of that description should be rated. But how did the people act? They understood that the

property in the chapel could alone be liable to a levy, and instead of adorning the chapel with gay and glittering chandeliers, they were satisfied with iron candlesticks, serviceable though unsplendid. They removed ornaments needless for simplicity, and purity and spirituality of worship, and they then said, "When the tax-gatherers come for the distress, open wide the doors—Take what property they can find—we defy their power." (*Cheers.*) Acquainted with such facts, he could not feel cheered even by the society of beauty and intellect that surrounded him, nor by the sympathy which he had excited. (*Applause.*) He could not cease to sorrow for the young minister depending upon his professional exertions for support, exposed to perpetual harassment, and to deductions that brought want to his abode. (*Applause.*) He indeed regretted, that by Dissenters themselves the evil was not sufficiently deplored. During the past year the Committee especially hesitated to apply to Parliament from the indifference indicated by their friends. Did they all suffer, and were they all oppressed, that indifference would soon disappear. They would no longer seem to say, "Let the gall'd jade wince, our withers are unwrung;" but would resolve firmly, unitedly, though respectfully, to make another application to Parliament, and in spite of any high church prejudices, might then obtain that relief they were well entitled to expect. (*Cheers.*)

[To be continued.]

Unitarian Fund.

In addition to our account of the Anniversary, p. 321, we have to report the names of the officers for the year ensuing:

Treasurer—JOHN CHRISTIE, Esq.
Secretary—Rev. W. J. FOX.

Committee.

Mr. J. FERNIE,
Rev. J. GILCHRIST,
Mr. S. HART,
Mr. T. HORNBY.
Mr. G. ROBINSON,
Mr. G. SMALLFIELD,
Mr. EDGAR TAYLOR,
Mr. JOHN BOWRING.
Rev. Dr. T. REES,
Mr. R. TAYLOR.

Chosen with a view to Foreign objects.

The Secretary authorizes us to say that the substance of the Report and the Journals of Mr. Wright will be inserted in the future Numbers of The Christian Reformer.

We have been importuned to furnish some further report of the proceedings at the dinner, but we lament that we are unfurnished with the means of doing this satisfactorily. To make up for the deficiency, we subjoin by request an account that appeared in the *Examiner* newspaper of May 28th. It is necessary to premise that for this account none of the gentlemen named in it are answerable, it being inserted without their privity. We had thought of striking out certain complimentary phrases, but as it is a public document, we prefer, on further consideration, inserting it entire.

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This Society, which was established about 14 years since, was proposed merely as an experiment to ascertain whether the simple doctrines of primitive Christianity, which represent the Almighty as endowed with all the endearing attributes of paternity, and as exercising those attributes in promoting the felicity of all his creatures, are not as well calculated to engage the attention of the poor as that of the higher orders: and whether the true character of God, as represented in the New Testament, if made known to the people by means of popular preaching, would not have the effect of banishing all moroseness from the Christian religion, and of inducing its votaries to exchange the gloom and horrors of superstition, for the sweet serenity of pious confidence and hope. The experiment is said to have completely answered, inasmuch as it has proved to demonstration that the unadulterated doctrines of Christianity are highly acceptable to the poor, whenever they are presented to them in their native simplicity; and that since the year 1806, the society has been constantly increasing in its respectability and in the number of its members. On looking into the printed rules, we perceive that "the Society is denominated The Unitarian Fund, for promoting Unitarianism by means of popular preaching; and that the money raised by the Society shall be applied—First, to enable poor Unitarian congregations to carry on religious worship;—Secondly, to reimburse the travelling and other expenses of teachers who may contribute their labours to the preaching of the gospel on Unitarian principles; and thirdly, to relieve those Christian ministers who, by embracing Unitarianism, subject themselves to poverty or personal inconvenience."

In the absence of William Smith, Esq., M. P. for Norwich, who had consented to preside at this meeting but was prevented by a necessary attention to his Parliamentary duties, the Rev. Robert Aspland, of Hackney, was called to the

Chair. After the cloth was drawn, *Non Nobis Domine* was sung in fine style, and the following toasts were given from the Chair:—

"The King; and may he never forget the principles which seated his family on the throne."—This toast was prefaced by an appropriate speech from the Chairman.

"Civil and Religious Liberty all the world over."—This toast brought up Mr. William Frend, who animadverted with great propriety on the prospect of their permanent establishment in Spain, and related some striking instances of the baneful influence of persecution for religious opinions.

"The memory of our departed Worthies."—(*Standing and in silence.*)

"The Unitarian Fund and prosperity to it."—When this toast had been drank, Mr. Christie rose for the purpose of giving the meeting an account of the origin and objects of the Society. This was an interesting and impressive speech, and was received by the company with abundant marks of applause.

"The Rev. Russell Scott, and thanks to him for the excellent Sermon which he had that day delivered before the Society."—This toast was drank with considerable enthusiasm, which continued to be manifested during the whole of the very impressive speech with which he favoured the meeting.

"Mr. John Towell Rutt, and the repeal of the Corporation and Test Acts."—Our limits will not allow, or we should be glad to print every thing which this gentleman said in favour of this very important measure.

"Mr. Wright, and the other Missionaries connected with the Unitarian Fund."—This gentleman delivered a very animated speech, replete with good sense, and remarkable for the simplicity of its detail.

"Mr. Wm. Smith, the Representative in Parliament for the city of Norwich; and a speedy divorce between us, and the Athanasian Marriage Ceremony."—In giving this toast, Mr. Aspland took occasion to pay a very handsome, and at the same time a very just tribute to the character of Mr. Smith, as the long-trying and steady friend of Civil and Religious Liberty; regretting that the unexpected change of the day from Wednesday to Thursday should have been the occasion of depriving the Society of his services in the Chair. The nature of the Bill which has been presented to Parliament for altering the Marriage Ceremony in favour of Unitarians, was also explained by Mr. Aspland with neatness and perspicuity.

"The health of Mr. Christie, our Treasurer."

"The York College, not forgetting Mr. Yates and Mr. Kentish."—When this toast had been drank, the Rev. Mr. Yates, of Liverpool, rose to explain some of the objects of that establishment, which was formed for the purpose of educating young gentlemen of the Unitarian persuasion for the Christian ministry. The Rev. Mr. Kentish, of Birmingham, then took a different view of the various advantages resulting from that institution, and assured the meeting of his determination to exert all his influence in promoting the prosperity of the College. Both these gentlemen gave an animated account of the flourishing nature of that seminary, and each of their speeches was received by the company with the warmest tokens of satisfaction and pleasure.

"Mr. James Young and the Unitarian Association."—Mr. Young returned thanks in a very neat speech, explanatory of the design and objects of that Society. He stated it to be an Association which was formed in the metropolis early in the last year, for the express purpose of Protecting the Civil Rights of Unitarians. Mr. Aspland followed in a course somewhat similar, and expatiated with some warmth on the injustice and impolicy of allowing penal laws against Unitarians and other Dissenters to remain on the Statute Books, when the Government knows that it will be necessary to pass a Bill of Indemnity every year for the protection of those who have rather chosen to break an unjust law, than do a violence to their consciences.

"The Rev. W. J. Fox, our able and worthy Secretary."—The proposal of this toast produced an universal burst of acclamation, which continued for a considerable time. When silence had been obtained, Mr. Fox rose to address the Meeting. This gentleman is the minister of Parliament-Court Chapel, Artillery Lane, Bishopsgate Street, who signalized himself by the publication of a volume of Lectures, and by a Sermon which he printed soon after Carlile's trial, "On the Conduct proper to be observed by Christians towards Deists." This gentleman commenced his speech by expressing the pleasure and satisfaction which he felt in having been elected the Secretary of so important a Society. He then explained, in a very impressive way, some of the advantages which are likely to result from the establishment of this and similar societies. He told us that he had himself formerly held Calvinistic opinions, and therefore was able to appreciate the importance of being delivered from so deplorable a thralldom. He had,

he said, seen mothers standing over their dying infants, frantic with despair in contemplating the uncertainty of their fate in a future world; he had known individuals who had formed such conceptions of the Almighty, as rendered them incapable of thinking of his character without dejection and horror. Knowing these things, he could not avoid rejoicing in the prosperity of a Society which is calculated to expel such unworthy apprehensions of Deity from the human mind, and to convince even the plainest understanding, that God is really the beneficent Governor of the world, and that the Father of All actually delights in the felicity of ALL his creatures.

We must not, however, attempt to go into detail, as it would be impossible for us to convey any thing like a correct idea of the grandeur and eloquence of this part of the address. Mr. Fox afterwards, in the happiest strain of oratory, drew a contrast between the misery of corporeal imprisonment and mental restraint, between the incarceration of the body and the slavery of the mind;—and here the brilliancy of his fancy, the variety of his imagery, his beautiful choice of expressions, and his power of working upon the passions, astonished even those who had been delighted by his impressive harangues.

This speech, which occupied forty minutes, adverted to several other subjects connected with the objects of the Society; but it would be impossible for us to do any thing like justice to the speaker if we were to attempt to enter into particulars, and therefore must content ourselves with saying, that the elocution of this gentleman is of the highest order, as it not only addresses the passions, but approves itself to the understanding, and captivates the best affections of the human mind. The rhetoric of this gentleman we consider to be exactly of the right cast,—the true Ciceronian eloquence, which displays not only a brilliant imagination, a fluency and elegance of expression, and a chastity of metaphor,—but also the acuteness of argument, the solidity of reason, and that facility in unfolding important truths which is sure to convince the judgment and reach the heart.

“The speedy departure of all penal Statutes against Religion, and a good obituary of them.”—This toast was prefaced by a luminous speech from the Chairman, who, on the delivery of all the preceding toasts, delighted the Meeting by the exhibition of great talents, enlivened by the utmost urbanity and good humour. Mr. Aspland has, indeed, shewn himself to be a chairman well qualified

to preside at any meeting which professes to furnish a feast of intellect.

“Mr. Talfourd, and the Stewards of the Meeting.”—Mr. T. returned thanks.

We believe there were nearly 400 persons at the Meeting. The intellectual treat with which the speakers furnished us, was of a high order.

Unitarian Association.

THE following statement has been printed by the Committee for circulation amongst Members of either House of Parliament who may be likely to support the application to the Legislature for relief on the subject of the Marriage Law. The Secretary will supply any persons who may be able to dispose of copies advantageously.

Several Petitions have been presented but the press of urgent business has delayed the bringing in of the Bill. It is referred to in the following statement, but as it has already appeared in the *Monthly Repository*, [XIV. 383,] we do not think it necessary to repeat it.

Short Statement of the Case of the Unitarian Dissenters, Petitioners for relief from some parts of the Ceremony imposed by the Marriage Act.

The grievance complained of is, that the Marriage Service required by the existing law is inconsistent in several points with the religious belief which the petitioners conscientiously entertain. In common with all Dissenters they feel great objection to a compulsive conformity with this religious service of the Established Church, from which in all other respects they are protected in separating themselves; but they also labour under the more peculiar grievance alluded to.

They are far from wishing in any way to impugn the policy of the Marriage Act, considered as a measure of civil regulation; but they submit, that in its operation as connected with the present service, it does impose a burden on conscience which they conceive was not intended by the legislature, as may be reasonably inferred from the nature of the measure itself, and from the ready relief which was given to the Jews and Quakers, who appear to have been the only persons that petitioned against its enactments.

The petitioners submit, that although in all Christian states the marriage contract has usually been consecrated by some religious ceremony, yet that by the municipal laws of almost all countries, and of this kingdom in particular till the Marriage Act of 26 Geo. II. c. 33, that

contract has been considered as essentially of a civil nature.

Accordingly, in some countries the contract is, so far as its legal consequences are considered, proved as a simple contract: and in this country the marriages of Dissenters, celebrated in the face of their own congregations, appear after the date of the Toleration Act to have been considered valid by our courts of law. (See *Hutchinson and wife v. Brooksbank*, 3 Levinz, 376.—*Wigmore's case*, Salkeld, 438. *) The marriages of Quakers stand, at the present day, entirely on this footing, no direct sanction being given them by the Marriage Act, but merely an exemption from its operation, leaving their marriages to stand, as all nonconformist marriages then did, upon the old law.

In this state the Marriage Act passed, as a measure avowedly of civil regulation: and that it was never intended as a means of enforcing a compulsive conformity is, as the petitioners submit, evident from the circumstance before stated, that the two classes of persons who objected to it were readily excepted from its operation.

That other Dissenters did not oppose the extension of the measure to them the petitioners apprehend was owing to their having gradually acquiesced in the forms of the Church, 1st. On account of attempts made to disturb their marriages in the Ecclesiastical Courts. (See *Haydon v. Gould*; Salkeld, 119.) 2dly. Because their religious opinions can scarcely be said to have differed much from the Church. 3rdly. Because one general place of celebration, registration and permanent record, was of great importance to all sects in a civil point of view.

The second of these reasons does not now apply to the case of the petitioners; and the civil advantages of the Marriage Act may, they apprehend, be secured to all by a very simple measure which they take the liberty of suggesting as one which appears to them to meet the justice of their case, at the same time that it trenches upon the profits or privileges of no one. It will be best explained by

* In the latter case Lord C. J. Holt's opinion is thus reported:—"By the canon law, a contract *per verba de presenti* is a marriage, as, *I take you to be my wife*. So it is of a contract *per verba de futuro*, viz. *I will take*, &c. If the contract be executed, and he does take her, it is a marriage, and they cannot punish for fornication, but only for not solemnizing the marriage according to the forms prescribed by law, but not so as to declare the marriage void."

subjoining a copy of the very short Bill which was brought into the last Parliament by Mr. W. Smith at a late period of the session, and will be again submitted to the consideration of the Legislature.

By referring to the Book of Common Prayer, it will be seen that every part of the service which is essential in a civil point of view, would under this Bill be retained; while, by the omission of the remainder, the objections of the petitioners, both as Dissenters and Unitarians, would be removed; and no alteration whatever is proposed to be made in the part which is reserved, as many of the clergy and other members of the Establishment would probably entertain strong objections to the principle of altering the Service, who would readily acquiesce in this measure, which has only the effect of shortening it; and the petitioners may venture to observe that omissions to a certain extent are by no means uncommonly practised by the officiating minister on his own responsibility, and sometimes out of respect for the religious scruples which he knows to be conscientiously entertained by the parties.

The just and liberal disposition of the Legislature manifested towards the petitioners by the late Statute of the 53 Geo. III. c. 160, which repeals in their favour the statutory penalties against the denial of the doctrine of the Trinity, encourages them to hope that their religious opinions present no sufficient objection to the extension in their favour of the recognized principles of toleration: and they must submit that such toleration is, in their case, necessarily incomplete while they are obliged to join in a service repugnant in many parts to their religious feelings and principles.

Christian Tract Society.

THE Anniversary Meeting, which was to have been held on March 9th, but unavoidably postponed, was holden on May 4th at the Old London Tavern, Bishopsgate Street. *William Frend, Esq.* was called to the Chair at the meeting for business; when, on the Treasurer presenting his Report, it appeared the Society was indebted to him £12 13s. 0d.

The Secretary read the Committee's Report, in which it was stated that the Committee, with the view of meeting the often-repeated call of the subscribers for new Tracts, had, shortly after the last Anniversary, published an abridgement of *Farmer Trueman's Advice to his Daughter Mary*, and that nearly half the impression had already been sent out from the Society's store.—This day the Committee were enabled to lay three

other new Tracts on the table; the first, entitled *Edmund and Margaret: or, Sobriety and Faithfulness Rewarded*, was from the pen of a lady who has long been a subscriber. The second was the *History of Isaac Jenkins, his Wife, and their Three Children*. This very interesting Tract was written by the late Dr. Beddoes; and from its high reputation, successive committees had been desirous of its republication, but could not procure a copy of it. It was stated that this Tract might, in reality, be considered the prolific parent of all the thousands and millions of tracts published by this and previously existing societies; for it was circulated most extensively before any Tract Society was instituted in Great Britain. That an idea might be formed of its merit, the Committee observed, they had the satisfaction of stating that the amiable and ingenious author of many of the Society's most approved Tracts, had expressed great pleasure in seeing the *History of Isaac Jenkins* inserted in the annual Catalogue. The third Tract was from the pen of the Rev. R. Wright, (author of No. II., or *Essay on Repentance*), and entitled *The Lost Son*. It was also announced that Mr. Wright had written a second Tract with the title of *The Recovery of the Lost Son*, and that the Committee had resolved on its speedy publication. Besides these two short Tracts, Mr. Wright had generously offered to write two more in continuation of his subject. Judging from the two MSS. already submitted to them, the Committee anticipated their approval of those promised.

By the publication of the four above-mentioned new Tracts, the Committee had been enabled to complete the Fourth Volume, the whole series amounting to thirty-eight. They also expressed a hope that, as more than an average number of new Tracts had been added to the list during the past year, the wishes of the subscribers would be amply gratified.

The number of Tracts printed and published by the Society during the last year has been as follows: of the four new Tracts, 7,500, and of six reprints, 10,500. The total number printed has been 284,000, of which 240,314 have been circulated.

The Society's present property was stated to be as follows;—

| | | | | |
|--|---------|-------------|-----------|----------|
| Due from Booksellers, Country Societies, &c. | - - - | 165 | 2 | 10½ |
| Estimated value of stock, on March 9th | - - - - | 252 | 11 | 6 |
| | | <u>£417</u> | <u>14</u> | <u>4</u> |

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| | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------|------------|-----------|----------|
| Brought forward | - | £417 | 14 | 4 |
| Due to the Treasurer | - - - | 12 | 13 | 0 |
| Due from the Society for paper | 76 | 14 | 0 | |
| — Printing and boarding volumes | - - - | 16 | 6 | 6 |
| | | <u>105</u> | <u>13</u> | <u>6</u> |
| Balance of the Society's property | - - - - | £312 | 0 | 10 |

From this statement it appears that the Society's property is about £30 less than at the last Anniversary.

Thanks were voted to the Treasurer, Secretary, Committee, to the late Collector the venerable Mr. Marsom, to the Auditors, and to Mr. Wright for his literary contributions.

The following gentlemen were elected into office for the year ensuing:

James Esdaile, Esq., *Treasurer*.

Mr. George Smallfield, *Secretary*.

Committee.

The Rev. Dr. T. Rees, Messrs. Frend, Hart, Holt, S. Bayley, D. Taylor, R. Taylor, Joseph Fernie, John Bowring, S. F. Leach and the Rev. R. Wright.

Mr. W. J. Titford, *Collector*.

Messrs. D. Gibbs, }
T. Gibson, } *Auditors.*
C. Lean, }

Notwithstanding the Anniversary had been so long delayed, and several other public meetings were to be held during the month, sixty-three gentlemen, at the close of the business, sat down to dinner: THOMAS HARDY, Esq., in the Chair.

In the course of the evening the Meeting was addressed by Mr. Frend, Mr. Esdaile, Mr. Smallfield, Dr. T. Rees, Mr. R. Taylor and Mr. John Bowring. The sentiments given from the Chair by which these gentlemen were called up, were prefaced by the worthy Chairman in a style which exhibited a heart fully alive to the best interests of mankind, and a warm attachment to this Society as affording means well calculated to promote that most desirable object. He drew a striking picture of the difference between the value of the nobility of *title* and that of *nature*, and unhesitatingly confessed, that he had "found more real nobility of nature among those of the labouring classes, than among those moving in what are called the superior ranks of society." The virtuous poor appeared to excite his warmest admiration; but he wished them to enjoy not only the fruits of virtues already acquired, but those also which result from the culture of

their minds—minds as susceptible of improvement as those of the apparently more favoured sons of rank and wealth.—The addresses of the other speakers were also characterized by an earnest assertion of the right of the *poor* to be furnished with those means of instruction which may afford them intellectual pleasures, while they strengthen and perfect their virtues.

The writer of this imperfect description of a highly interesting meeting, cannot conclude without inviting the attention of an enlightened and generous public to the objects of *The Christian Tract Society*. The times, it is confidently hoped, are gone by not only in this, but in almost every civilized portion of the globe, when the majority of the rich could delight in keeping the poor in profound ignorance, as the best or only means of rendering them subservient to their own unbounded love of pleasure or their insatiable cupidity. But if these times are gone by in Great Britain, how is it to be accounted for that *The Christian Tract Society's* publications are not more known—that they are not circulated among the *poor* and *youth in general* in a tenth part of the ratio of their intrinsic worth? Have any ministers publicly advocated the objects of the Society?—Though they might not be influenced by what is stated in the 6th Rule, viz. “The Committee shall be empowered to appoint any Ministers of Congregations, who may have preached Sermons on behalf of the Society, members for life”—yet their affection for *youth* and their pious desire to instruct the *ignorant*, it is hoped, may ere long induce many of those who cannot be doubted to possess these feelings, to become the advocates of a Society whose Tracts, as a whole, may safely challenge comparison with those of any Society in existence.

Warwickshire Monthly Meeting of Ministers.

On Wednesday the 7th inst. a *Monthly Meeting of Ministers* was held at the Old Meeting, Alcester, Warwickshire. There were eight Ministers present. The Rev. James Scott, of Cradley, offered up the prayer before Sermon, and the Rev. James Yates delivered an interesting Sermon from Deut. xxix. 29. The reporter cannot pretend to do justice to this excellent Sermon, in which the preacher, with great force of language and of reasoning, shewed that mysteries, beyond the reach of human powers, are not properly the objects of our faith,—that where mystery begins, religion ends; but that the great truths of *revelation* are plain

and not difficult to be understood.—In the improvement of his subject, Mr. Yates, with much energy, shewed that a regard to the principle of the text, would have preserved the world from the two great evils of priestcraft and persecution; which have been universally exerted, not on account of the plain and practical parts of religion, but in support of mysteries, which lie far beyond the grasp of human faculties.

He was followed by the Rev. Mr. Bransby, who preached an admirable Sermon from John xii. 46: “I am come a light into the world;” in which he drew a contrast between the Christian and the Atheist, and shewed in a clear, strong and pathetic manner, the infinite superiority of the former over the latter as to their motives to virtue, and their sources of consolation under the troubles of life, and in the prospect of death.

The ministers and a few friends from the neighbourhood dined together at the Swan, and spent the afternoon in a very agreeable manner. Several persons addressed the meeting on subjects connected with the object of their meeting: viz. the Rev. Mr. Yates, Bransby, Browne of Gloucester, T. Davis, and Mr. Corn of Birmingham, as Trustee of the Meeting-House. Mr. Thomas Foster, of Evesham, gratified the company by reading a very interesting letter lately received from America from his intelligent correspondent Hannah Bernard, on the progress that Unitarianism is making in that part of the world. T. D.

June 10, 1820.

Contributions for the Unitarians at Madras.

SIR,

YOUR readers will have seen from the Report of the Unitarian Fund Anniversary in your last Number, (p. 321,) that the plan of that Institution was, by an unanimous vote of the General Meeting, extended so as to embrace foreign as well as British objects. I advert to this subject at present in order to apprise those persons who have manifested a wish to assist William Roberts and the Madras congregation, that in consequence of this change in the constitution of the Society, it will now be competent to the Committee of the Unitarian Fund to take up that case, and to apply to it such sums as may be raised expressly for the purpose, and such a portion of their own funds, as they may, in their discretion, think it proper to devote to it. As soon as the new Committee shall have entered upon the duties of their office, I shall

place at their disposal the monies which have been remitted to me on account of William Roberts. As the Society have done me the honour to place me on the Committee, as one of three additional members appointed with a special view to foreign objects, I shall still have great pleasure in receiving from those persons who may find it most convenient to communicate through me, any sums which they may wish to remit in aid of the Madras Unitarians, though I would at the same time suggest, that the more regular medium of communication with the Treasurer of the Unitarian Fund is the Secretary, Mr. Fox, who will, I am sure, have great satisfaction in submitting to any addition which this service may make to the weight of the various and important duties which his office already imposes upon him.

You will oblige me by inserting below the annexed list of monies which have been paid into my hands with a view to the Madras case.

THOMAS REES.

Kennington, June 12, 1820.

| | | | |
|--|-----|---|---|
| Bristol Fellowship Fund - | £10 | 0 | 0 |
| York Ditto - - - - - | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| A Friend at York - - - - - | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Crediton Fellowship Fund - | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Lincoln Ditto - - - - - | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Tenterden Ditto - - - - - | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| Plymouth Ditto - - - - - | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| R. Cooke, Esq., Stoke - - - | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| Mr. J. Hayward, Brundon, near Sudbury - - - - - | 3 | 0 | 0 |

One or two other contributions have been announced, which I have not yet received.

PARLIAMENTARY.

House of Lords, Friday, May 12.

Petition of the Rev. Pike Jones.

LORD HOLLAND rose to present to their lordships a petition from the Rev. Pike Jones, curate of North Bovey, in the county of Devon. Before he stated the circumstances of the injury of which the petitioner complained, he thought it necessary to say a few words on the time at which the complaint was brought forward. The transaction to which the petition related, took place in September last, and he felt it due to the petitioner, as well as to himself, to account for the delay of which he might otherwise be accused. The fact was, that in November the petition was put into the hands of a noble lord, whose love of liberty and the constitution was only equalled by the ability and eloquence he displayed in their support—he meant his noble friend, Lord Grey. Before some inquiries, which were considered indispensable, could be com-

pleted, that noble Lord's indisposition unfortunately took place. The business was then referred to him, (Lord Holland,) but the short duration of the session, and he having also been subject to indisposition, rendered it impossible to bring the subject sooner before their lordships. He stated these things merely that the delay might be accounted for, and that the time at which the petition was presented might not operate to the prejudice of the petitioner. With respect to the course he was about to pursue, he confessed that it would certainly have been more consistent with the usual practice if he had merely introduced it, moved that it be laid on the table, and afterwards have founded some motion on it; but he thought it more candid towards the Rev. Prelate, of whose conduct the petitioner complained, and other members of that House referred to in it, to state at once the course he meant to pursue. With regard to the petitioner himself, of whom he knew nothing before he had communicated with him on the subject of the petition, he must say that he had always found him acting in the most fair and candid manner in every thing connected with the affair of which he complained. The ordinary course would now be to state merely the purport of the petition, but in doing so, he would make such observations as the circumstances suggested. The petitioner was a clergyman of the diocese of Exeter, and attended on the day specified in the petition a county meeting, called to consider the claims of the Catholics. A gentleman, adverse to the claims of that body of Christians, made a speech, to which the petitioner replied. Soon after this meeting, he was appointed to two livings, and obtained from three neighbouring clergymen the testimonials usually required for institution, in order to their being countersigned by his diocesan. These testimonials stated, in the customary terms, that the parties subscribing them had known Mr. Jones for three years; that he had during that time led a sober and pious life, and had never written or done any thing contrary to the doctrines of the Church of England. He presented these testimonials to his Bishop, who refused to sign them. The petitioner, on this refusal, wrote to the two Bishops of the dioceses in which the livings to which he had been appointed were situated. One of these reverend prelates, not now in that House, (the Bishop of Hereford,) answered, that he could not grant institution on such testimonials. The other Reverend Prelate, the Bishop of Lincoln, also declined to grant institution, except on the production of testimonials signed by three clergymen, and countersigned by

the Bishop of the diocese to which the applicant belonged; observing, in his answer, that it was always a rule with him not to accept the testimonials unless they were so countersigned. In consequence of these refusals, the petitioner solicited, and having obtained an interview with his diocesan, requested that Reverend Prelate to inform him of the reasons which induced him to withhold his signature from the testimonials. It is stated that the Reverend Prelate, while assuming that he was not bound to give any explanation, still thought it more fair and manly to declare the reasons of his refusal. They did not apply to want of competency in the petitioner to fulfil the duties of a clergyman, or to any immoral conduct, but to one single act connected with the exercise of his political rights. The objection was to words which the petitioner was said to have spoken at the meeting already referred to. The petitioner offered to shew that he had never uttered the words attributed to him, and wished to know who his accusers were; but their names were not communicated to him. At last he was obliged to surrender the presentations to the two livings to the patron from whom he received them. He thus sustained a loss of £500 a-year, and all his professional prospects were destroyed, without his having been allowed an opportunity of disproving the facts stated against him. For this loss he has been assured, by the best advice he could obtain, there is no legal remedy, and he therefore came before their lordships with his petition. That petition contained statements and evidence which, in the present stage of the proceeding, must doubtless be considered as *ex-parte*, but he must say for the petitioner, that, in all the communications he had had with him, he not only appeared most anxious to state nothing but facts, but also to suggest every thing which might serve to explain or to justify the conduct of his diocesan. He requested the Reverend Prelate to state to the other Bishops that he had no objection to his moral character. This his diocesan not only did, but went a step farther, and stated the grounds of his refusal to countersign the testimonials. The result, however, was, that the petitioner now remained a marked and stigmatized person, enjoying his curacy only at the will of his diocesan: and here his Lordship could not help observing that this appeared very extraordinary; for if the Reverend Prelate thought the petitioner unfit to be instituted to the livings to which he had been presented, he surely ought to remove him, for the same reasons, from his curacy. If his conduct at public meetings had rendered

him an improper person for the one situation, it equally unfitted him for the other. That a clergyman should be a warm politician, might be an objection with some, but it never was supposed that a clergyman should be deprived of his rights, or subjected to a loss of property, for exercising them. His conduct in his curacy had been most exemplary; since he was appointed, he had never been absent a day from his duty. He had not long filled the situation when he received a letter from the wife of the rector, her husband being unable to write, approving of his conduct; and a petition, respectably signed, was presented to the patron, requesting that he might be presented to the living on the death of the incumbent. But it was needless to dwell on these circumstances, as the bishop of the diocese had himself no objection to the petitioner's moral character. He now came to consider the justice of the right claimed by the Reverend Prelate. It could not but at first sight appear most extraordinary to any person who looked at the question, that the bishop of a diocese should have the power of preventing the preferment of a clergyman in another diocese, though he could not prevent preferment in his own. Every bishop, it was true, had power to refuse institution to a living in his own diocese, but then he can be compelled by law to state his reasons for the refusal; and if those reasons do not appear sufficient to the tribunal which has to decide on the case, an order will issue to compel the induction. This, however, did not apply to the case of a bishop refusing to sign the testimonials necessary for obtaining possession of a living in another diocese; but such refusal appeared to him the exercise of a most enormous and arbitrary discretionary power. It may be said, on the part of the bishop, Would you have me sign a certificate contrary to my conscience? Would you have me record a good opinion of a person, when I entertain quite a contrary opinion? His answer would be in the affirmative. He would say that the bishop ought to sign, or that no disadvantage should be sustained by the applicant in consequence of his refusal, or at least that the reasons of the refusal should be stated before a tribunal competent to decide on their validity. Their lordships would perceive the great injury to which a considerable portion of his Majesty's subjects must be exposed if no redress could be obtained in cases of this kind. With regard to Mr. Jones, he had found it necessary to surrender the presentations he had obtained to the patron of the livings. Had he not done this, the appointment to the livings would have fallen to the diocesan,

and the proprietor would have been deprived of his right. The refusal, in the present case, he must say appeared to him injudicious, and the power, if it did exist, hastily exercised. He would now look a little at the reasons assigned for the refusal, which, as he had stated, consisted in words said to have formed part of a speech delivered by the petitioner at a county meeting. It was stated that he had said that 9-10ths of the clergy of the Church of England did not believe all the Thirty-nine Articles of that Church; that when they subscribed to recognitions of the damnatory clauses of St. Athanasius's Creed, they signed what they did not believe. It was also stated that he had asserted there was nothing more damnatory in the Catholic system; but it appeared clear, from the tenour of the petitioner's argument, that his words had been imperfectly reported to the Bishop. It appeared that, in replying to what had been said by a preceding speaker, he had contended that the argument urged against the Catholic Church on account of the creeds which Catholics subscribed, might, by a parity of reasoning, be stated against the Church of England. To prove that this was the nature of his argument, the petitioner referred to the report of his speech in the newspaper which gave an account of the meeting. It contained nothing like the words attributed to him. He also requested that the whole tenour of his speech might be examined, in order that it might be judged whether it was possible he could have made such a statement. But it would be said that several persons had stated that they heard the words uttered. These persons were, however, unknown, and several were, on the contrary, ready to declare that the words were not used. Among others who were near the petitioner, was a gentleman, a relative of Sir V. Gibbs, who appeared to have attended the meeting for a purpose different from that of Mr. Jones; but the account he gave of the words was far from supporting a charge which had been sufficient to justify the depriving the petitioner of all prospect of success in his profession. That gentleman blamed the manner of Mr. Jones, but completely exculpated him from the tendency attributed to his speech. This and other evidence was offered to the Bishop, but it did not produce the desired effect of inducing the Reverend Prelate to countersign the testimonials, nor procure for Mr. Jones the names of the persons who had accused him. But it was proper that the argument of the petitioner should be stated more entire than had yet been done. A

gentleman, in the course of the proceedings at the meeting, had made a charge against the Catholics that they signed intolerant creeds, and had observed that he would believe what they signed, and not what they professed. This, by-the-bye, was a mode of proceeding which the Bishop did not follow with regard to Mr. Jones; for the Reverend Prelate would not believe that gentleman on what he had signed; for he had subscribed the Thirty-nine Articles, which he was charged with denying. In answer, however, to the argument of the Catholics, Mr. Jones would not admit that they all signed intolerant creeds, but contended that if they did, he had no right to draw from speculative points in their creed a conclusion contrary to what they professed, because, if that were admitted a fair argument, it might be turned against the churches of the United Kingdom. In particular, it might be urged against the members of the Church of England that they signed the Thirty-nine Articles; and yet, were the subscribers to be asked whether they believed that those who refused to acknowledge some of those Articles must be damned, nine-tenths of them, he was sure, would answer that they did not. This appeared to have been the course of his argument. He did not wish to enter into the details of controversy, or he could easily shew that the argument used by the petitioner at a public meeting was nothing more than what had been said, over and over again, by some of the ornaments of the Church of England. The greatest lights of the Church had held the same language, and it was supported by one of the resolutions come to when the scheme of comprehension was under consideration in 1691. Was it not true that Tillotson, in speaking of the Athanasian Creed, had said he wished the Church were well rid of it? Burnet, in the conclusion of his History, stated that 60 out of 100 signed it without reading or understanding it, or caring about it, and that others subscribed from necessity. Does the Reverend Prelate mean to say, that had he been then living, he would have prevented that great man from filling the see of Salisbury? Archdeacon Paley had, in his works, repeatedly expressed disapprobation of the Athanasian Creed. On one occasion he states that he is persuaded the great body of the clergy disbelieve the damnatory clauses; and yet he was promoted after he had made that declaration. He was instituted by a Reverend Prelate of high character after the publication of his sentiments on this subject. If he did not wish to avoid every thing which might have the appearance of a taunt,

he could easily shew that the denunciatory clauses had been condemned by many reverend prelates on the opposite bench. But he could not help asking the Right Reverend Prelate who had refused to countersign the testimonials for Mr. Jones on the report of words attributed to him, how he would like if that House were to proceed to pass a vote against himself on the report of language stated to have come from him? He held in his hand an address by a clergyman of the Reverend Prelate's diocese, published last year. He wished he could read the whole of it, for it applied to all parties in the House. It began, it was true, with his side, but the fire was speedily directed to the other, and finally at the woodcock. The author observed, that it was little known to what danger the Church had been exposed by an administration who were dismissed for openly advocating idolatry. (*Laughter.*) But their lordships must hear what was said of the other side. He and his friends were rebels, but the noble lords opposite were traitors. The author stated that the successors of that administration had taken care so to frame the oath of the Regent, that it should present no bar to the Catholic claims. It was to be hoped that the noble lord opposite would take warning by this, and satisfy these gentlemen in framing the coronation-oath. (*Laughter.*) But the author continued and asserted that the Regent had authorized the Clerk of the Closet to state to him, that if both Houses of Parliament should pass a Bill to emancipate the Catholics, he would refuse to give it his assent. It certainly was not a little extraordinary that a dignitary of the Church should gravely consider himself authorized to declare, on the authority of the first magistrate of the State, that a negative would be put on a certain measure if passed by the two Houses of Parliament. But what would the Reverend Prelate say, were that House to act upon it as he had done with respect to Mr. Jones, and pass a vote without allowing any opportunity for vindication? The spirit of Mr. Jones's argument merely was, that he did not impute bad intentions to the Catholics from what they signed, because, by a parity of reasoning, the same argument might be applied to the Church of England. If in that House explanation was allowed to settle the meaning of words used in debate, ought not a similar opportunity to have been afforded to Mr. Jones with regard to words which had passed in the confusion of a public meeting? Here he could not help recollecting words which had fallen from a Reverend Prelate of great learning and ability, who

once sat on the bench opposite, and who never had been suspected of heterodoxy. He alluded to the Bishop Hensley. He remembered that learned prelate once standing up in his place, and speaking on a question relative to a minor, a female ward of the Court of Chancery, who was in the custody of Catholic relatives. The learned and venerable prelate said that he did not believe she ever entered into the distinctions of transubstantiation, consubstantiation, or any of these eoundrums. Had that distinguished prelate lived, it was not unlikely that it might have been proposed to promote him to the see of York, when it became vacant. Now, suppose that, on such a vacancy, some members of that House, who had access to his Majesty, had gone to him, and secretly advised him against the promotion, on the ground that the Reverend Prelate treated the most sacred ordinances of the Church as rebuses and eoundrums: but had this been done, in what would the transaction have differed from the conduct of the clergy of Exeter against the petitioner? He came now to the last point in the petition—the remedy which the petitioner had in law, and without applying to this House. And here he must observe, that if, by the exercise of a power conferred by the legislature, an individual received an injury, and if a whole class of men were liable to the same injury, he did not think that he would place the defence of the whole class on that individual. But, in addition to this, great difficulties were started on the point of law, which any individual might be ruined in contending with. In his (Lord Holland's) opinion, the counter-signature of the diocesan to a certificate of character signed by the three clergymen merely attested the identity of the clergyman who demanded institution, and gave no additional attestation to his character. He believed this was the principle on which the counter-signature was required. The practice which prevailed, of not following invariably the rule of refusing institution without a counter-signature, countenanced the idea that it was a mere form to attest the identity of the clergyman to whose character the certificate referred. Accordingly, he believed, that where the three attesting clergymen resided in the diocese where the reverend person to whose character they bore testimony was to be instituted, it was not necessary that their certificate should be countersigned by their diocesan. The counter-signature was merely, he believed, ministerial, and attested not the character of the clergyman requiring institution, but the credibility and identity of the clergymen who signed the certifi-

case. By the ancient canon law, bishops were not only empowered to demand certificates, but required to do so. A remnant of this practice only now existed; but this state of the law would create a great deal of difficulty in trying the question before the inferior courts. A suit must be instituted of *quare impedit*. To that a special plea might be given in, and, after many tedious and expensive proceedings, a decision might be obtained on which the Court of King's Bench might be moved for a *mandamus*, calling upon the Bishop to countersign the certificate, or to institute the petitioner. He (Lord Holland) did not know what might be the success of such a course, nor could he undertake to say what could, or could not, be done by law; but this he could say, that it would afford no relief to the petitioner. By advising him to follow this course their Lordships would say to him, "You must not come here—you must go to the courts below." You may procure a writ of *quare impedit*, and, after special pleas and demurrers, you may be able to obtain a *mandamus* from the Court of King's Bench, and then you may be instituted into your benefice; but this was no remedy at law, because, before the petitioner obtained it, he must be ruined. A poor curate could not defray law-expenses to establish his rights. To refuse him, therefore, the counter-signature necessary for his institution was to blast all his prospects. In the present case it was particularly hard on the petitioner. By refusing the necessary form his diocesan said to him, "You have chosen a profession of which you can never divest yourself, and which disqualifies you from entering on some others: you have spent a great part of your life in acquiring its requisite qualifications, and performing its peculiar duties, but in consequence of some unguarded words which you have uttered at a public meeting, your advancement in the line of your profession is for ever barred—your prospects are blasted, and you are left to want, neglect and despair." He (Lord Holland) allowed that the reverend and learned Prelate did not refuse his counter-signature to the petitioner's certificate on the ground of a difference between them on the Catholic question; but he had taken care to state that difference, and what might be the consequence of such a refusal, coupled with the declaration of such a difference, on the minds of the other clergy of the diocese. When church-promotion would become the subject of discussion at the breakfast-tables, or in the domestic circles of the clergy, would

not their friends and relatives warn them, as they valued their hopes of preferment, or provision for their families, not to interfere to obtain additional privileges to our fellow-Christians, and would they not cite with great effect the example and the fate of Mr. Jones? When the extraordinary power of the higher orders of the Church over their inferiors was under discussion, he had pointed out some consequences like the present. If these extraordinary powers were not necessary, they ought to be abolished or regulated; and if, unfortunately, they could not be dispensed with, their exercise should be watched, and their abuse prevented. (*Hear, hear.*) After a few more observations, which were listened to with great attention, and frequently cheered, the noble Lord concluded by moving the reading of the petition, adding that, after it was read and received, he would move that it be referred to a Committee to inquire into the case of the petitioner, and the expediency of requiring the counter-signature of the diocesan to the necessary testimonial of character, preparatory to institution.

The petition was then read. It set forth the facts stated in the first part of the noble mover's speech, and concluded by praying for such relief as the House could grant.

(To be continued.)

NOTICES.

SCOTTISH UNITARIAN CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION. The Eighth Anniversary will be held at Glasgow on the 30th and 31st of July. The Rev. Robert Aspland has engaged to preach the Annual Sermon.

BENJ. MARDON.

Western Unitarian Society.

THE postponed Annual Meeting (see p. 323) will be held on Wednesday, July 19th: the Rev. Wm. Hincks, of Exeter, will preach on the occasion.

J. MANNINGFORD.

THE Members of the Unitarian Tract Society, established in Birmingham, for Warwickshire and the neighbouring counties, intend to hold their next Annual Meeting at Birmingham, on Tuesday, July 18. The Rev. Robert Aspland, of Hackney, has engaged to preach.

JAMES HEWS BRANSBY,
Secretary.

FOREIGN.

FRANCE.

At present the advocates of the old regime seem to triumph in this eventful country. The liberty of the press is restricted, and what remains is held on sufferance, and is exercised with a sword over the head of the writer. The following is the conclusion of a letter just received from Paris:

"The 'Protestant Annals' have ceased till better times. One cannot be liberal and tolerant by permission and privilege."

HANOVER.

The Hanoverian journals contain the following statement:—"We hear that, in the present Session of the Assembly of States, it will be proposed to abolish tithes, or at least to substitute for them a tax of another kind. The advantages arising from this measure could not fail to have a great influence on the agricultural prosperity of our kingdom; for it is, in fact, almost wholly an agricultural country, the manufactures being in comparison insignificant; and as there is a great extent of heath and waste land, which no one has yet ventured to cultivate, because of the great expense which such an enterprise would require, (the tithes and land-tax must be added,) the abolition of these imposts will much facilitate undertakings of this nature, and the Diet will merit the gratitude of the country if they carry this plan into execution."

AMERICA. U. S.

Law against Duelling.—A Bill has passed its third reading in the Legislature of ALABAMA, to take effect from the 1st day of March, which subjects the party engaged in a duel to three months' imprisonment, and a fine of 2000 dollars, one half to go to the Public Treasury, the other to the Informer. The offender to give security for his good behaviour for two years, and to be disqualified from holding any office in the State, and for being a member of either House of the General Assembly. The Bill requires every officer of the State to take an oath that he has not since the passing of this Act violated its provisions, and that he will not during his continuance therein.

A late fatal Duel.—The details of the duel between Commodore Barron and Commodore Decatur are given at great length in the American papers. They fought at eight paces: both were wounded. A most extraordinary proceeding took place in the House of Representatives. Mr. Randolph proposed that the House should adjourn, to give the members an opportunity to attend the funeral of Commodore Decatur, and that they should wear crape round the left arm till the end of the Session. This motion was opposed by Mr. Taylor, of New York, who said he would resist it, as Commodore Decatur had died in the act of setting the laws of God and his country at defiance. The notice was withdrawn.

CORRESPONDENCE.

Communications have been received from Messrs. Stephen Freeman; J. W. Fairbridge; Dr. J. Jones; T. Davis; and Mrs. Hubbard; B. G.; W. A.; An Occasional Reader; A Berean (Halstead); Quid Verum; A Traveller; A Christian; Medius; W. P. H.; W. J.; M. N.

We have also received a letter from Ceylon, from Mr. Daniel Harwood, Paymaster Sergeant of the 45th Regiment, who was introduced to our readers Vol. X. 413, and who contributed several papers to The Christian Reformer, announcing his return to Trinitarianism. It shall be inserted in the next Number.

A Correspondent has favoured us with a letter from Mr. John Pye, of Sheffield, written in 1772, on the then application for the Repeal of the Corporation and Test Acts.

The addition of the Signature of Mr. Luckcock to the account of the Birmingham Sunday School, p. 296, was the act of the Editor.

We shall be glad to receive the papers offered by Mr. Bloor, and request him to furnish them as early in the ensuing month as is convenient.

ERRATUM.

Page 297, col. 2, line 14 from the bottom, for phænomena read phenomena.